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Social Integration at a Japanese Retirement Community

by

Yasuhito Kinoshita

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

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in

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ABSTRACT

Social Integration at a Japanese Retirement Community

by

Yasuhito Kinoshita

This dissertation is an ethnographic study of social behavior among the residents in a planned retirement community in Japan. It explores the issue of social integration within the overall theoretical framework of Social Interactionism and the emic perspective of Japanese culture.

It is based on 13 months of field work, during which I lived in this community. Participant observation, interviewing, and unobtrusive measures constitute the methodology, although the data for this dissertation are primarily observational.

The dissertation has three parts. Part One provides an overview of Japanese aging, which includes demographic characteristics, the impact of social change, the current welfare system for the aged, and the current state of development of retirement communities. In short, the socio-cultural background for the emergence of retirement communities is discussed.

Part Two is concerned with the description of the research setting and the demographic characteristics of the residents. Overall, the residents represent an elite

segment of their generation, and have similar socio-economic backgrounds.

Social integration is discussed in Part Three. Major problems between the management and the residents are analyzed with regard to the unique cultural meanings of "contract," "welfare," and "contract welfare." The role and functions of the Residents Association as a formal organization and those of various groups and individual informal activities are presented. This discussion centers on types of roles and their availability, and on the relationship between roles and social integration. Patterns of social interaction are discussed with regard to activity in the community, key behavioral norms, the management of interactional distance, socialization, and friendship.

I conclude that the insulation of the elderly itself does not promote social integration in this setting. Rather, new roles must emerge that will help the residents structure a newly constituted, informal, and unstructured social situation. This is further discussed in the context of Japanese culture.


Christie W. Kiefer, Ph.D., Chairman

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Chapter 1. Introduction

This chapter consists of five sections: first, I state the purpose of this dissertation. Second, the significance of this study will be discussed. Third, why Fuji-no-sato¹ was selected as a research site will be explained. The fourth section is concerned with methodology, and the process of my entry to the setting will be dealt with in the fifth section.

1. The Purpose of the Dissertation

This is an ethnographic study of a retirement community in Japan. The purpose of the study is to depict the social life of the residents at Fuji-no-sato, with a theoretical focus on social integration.² This dissertation will provide a descriptive analysis of the process of community creation by aged³ residents in a Japanese setting. However, although the theoretical focus is on the issue of social integration, this is first and foremost a study of the social behavior of the Japanese elderly who are living at Fuji-no-sato.

There is a paucity of cross-cultural, descriptive knowledge on the social life of the aged in age-homogeneous settings, and it is important to provide rich descriptive accounts from different cultures; development of general theory on social integration of the aged or on community

creation by the aged may not be the most pressing task for cross-cultural gerontologists. To my knowledge, this constitutes the second cross-cultural study of old people in age-homogeneous settings outside the United States, the only other being a study of an apartment complex for working class retirees in France (Ross, 1977). This is the first study on the phenomenon in a non-Western society. Viable hypotheses or testable theories in this sub-field of gerontology should be inductively formulated from an accumulation of descriptive accounts of the phenomenon in different cultures, and I do not believe that we have yet reached that stage.

Although the graying of Japan is now a fairly well known phenomenon, little is known about Japanese retirement communities. Such communities are new in Japan, having emerged for the last decade or so, and their number is still very small, about thirty in 1983. They are, therefore, in an experimental stage and many are planning for the future without systematic knowledge as to their advantages or disadvantages, or knowledge of what groups of the aged they would be appropriate for. Yet there are strong indications that retirement communities are about to emerge in Japan in great number.

Since there is no previous study on a Japanese retirement community, even by Japanese researchers, I started this research with very general questions. Namely, what would happen when a group of old people who had lived

in the society which has been traditionally family-centered and in which human relationships are hierarchically organized came to live together in a Western-style, age-homogeneous, and peer group oriented residential setting? Who are the residents at Fuji-no-sato? That is, what are their demographic characteristics? Why and how did they come to live there? What would be the governing principles in their social interactions? And, to what extent would social integration be possible? I also wondered what Fuji-no-sato would be like as an environment; how it would be operated; and most importantly, what social significance it is likely to have in Japan.

I will not raise the question in this dissertation whether retirement communities are good or bad for the Japanese aged; for this question is simply unanswerable, at least at this point. Not only can it not be answered by a single study of one retirement community, but any attempt to find an answer to this question inescapably involves a value judgment. I do not have the criteria for such a judgment, nor do I believe it possible to attain such criteria at this stage. It is true that most Japanese still believe that family care is the most desirable arrangement for the well-being of the aged and that it is basically wrong to segregate old people, except for welfare homes for those aged who do not have supporting family members. There exists negative sentiment against any form of congregate residential arrangements for the elderly, far stronger in

Japan than in the United States. Thus, emotionally speaking, the question already has an answer. On the other hand, it is also true that the growing number of the Japanese, young as well as old, are now searching for new alternatives to the traditional family care system which has become increasingly problematic due to social changes in the post World War II period.

My fundamental, value-laden position in this dissertation is that it is desirable that the society provides as many alternatives as possible for its aged members so that they would be able to choose an alternative which could best fulfill their social and psychological needs. As we will see in this study, there are many problems, and many possibilities, in the community I studied, and one can make a good argument either for or against the feasibility of retirement communities in Japan. However, I have not taken either approach in this study. I have tried to maintain a balanced viewpoint, and if I fail in this endeavor, it is simply due to inadequate execution of the analysis.

In short, this is a descriptive study of the social life of the residents in one retirement community in Japan, and as such it is limited in time (the current generation of the Japanese elderly, and the period from the third to the fourth years of the studied community) and in space (Fuji-no-sato). Future generations of the Japanese aged will be different in many ways from the present generation, and it

is also likely that the social life of the residents at Fuji-no-sato will change as time goes on, i.e., as the residents get older and more frail. And of course, Fuji-no-sato does not necessarily represent all retirement communities currently in operation in Japan.

2. Significance of This Study

Mass longevity, if we borrow Plath's term (1980), is a gift of industrialization. For the first time in human history, we are living in an era in which the average person can expect and actually attain nearly the full span of life that our biological capacities permit. Indeed, aging has become a major social problem in all post-industrial societies in the West and, as we will see in Part One, in Japan, too. While there may be distinct differences in history, culture, or socio-economic conditions in these societies, particularly between the Western societies and Japan, aging tends to pose similar societal problems for all--problems such as the need to provide sufficient income, adequate housing, and cost-effective and quality medical and health care services, which can only be realized through well-coordinated and sensitive social policies. For the Japanese, Great Britain and Sweden have long been the models to emulate in social policy. However, it has become apparent in recent years that both nations, along with other advanced welfare nations in the West, are having serious

problems in keeping their societies solvent while maintaining a high standard of welfare services for their citizens. Provided that the aging of populations is an inevitable consequence of industrialization, it is a challenge that all societies of our time have to face. No one nation can provide the model answer to this challenge, and aging is now a global problem which requires international collaboration.

Perhaps it is correct to assume that even though the increase of the older population may give rise to similar problems in different societies, the ways in which each society copes with them will be uniquely shaped by its socio-cultural characteristics. Part of the knowledge gained in this process may be useful only by that society whereas other parts of it may be directly or indirectly transferable to other societies.

It is in this context that aging in Japan attracts our scientific attention for several reasons: (1) Japan is the first non-Western society which is experiencing an explosion of the aged population; (2) it has achieved a high level of industrialization and political stability; (3) it has developed, with equal success, high standards of health care; (4) Japanese culture appears to encourage maturity in aging, and to venerate the aged themselves; and (5) Japan is traditionally a family-centered society in which the elderly members appear to be better socially integrated than their counterparts in the West. Thus, the study of how Japan is

coping with the problems of aging may reveal dynamic interactions between a society's unique socio-cultural characteristics on one hand and the imperative impact of industrialization and concomitant social change on the other. Whether or not the nation which has accomplished the economic miracle in this century will be able to achieve another miracle, this time conquering societal problems resulting from an aging population, may indeed arouse one's curiosity.

However, a strategic and pragmatic approach to the societal problems of aging may be a superficial one, and not the crux of the challenge we face today. This does not mean that I underrate the significance of such an approach; the problems are enormously difficult to solve and yet, no matter how difficult or formidable, their solutions are essential for the well-being of old people in any society. However, what is the crux of the issue, I believe, is the fact that we do not have a viable philosophy upon which various social policies for the aged should be based. Put another way, today we need a new philosophy of human values. For the era of mass longevity is also the era of the mass dependency of the aged. The Rationalism of the West, which was the propelling philosophy of industrialization, producing technological advances and countless innovations to improve our material life, appears to be dysfunctional in our attempt to cope with the mass of dependent elderly, primarily because it judges the value of the individual on

the basis of his/her productive capabilities.

It is an irony of history that the end of an era is sometimes an unintended consequence of the forces that began that era. For instance, as Max Weber (1958) demonstrated in his study of the relationship between Protestantism and Capitalism, the driving force in one era tended to draw the closing curtain on itself because of its very success--the economic activities of stoic Protestants demonstrating their firm belief in God contributed to the primitive accumulation of capital from which Capitalism took off. In that process, sacred activity unintentionally helped the birth of an intrinsically secular and material-oriented economic system. Likewise, one may find this theme in Marxism.

The emergence of a dependent aged population is an unintended but inevitable consequence of industrialization. It is indeed an irony that the post-industrial societies which have achieved new levels of social wealth in human history, come to have previously unseen numbers of non-productive, dependent old people. And yet, we do not have a philosophy or a set of accepted social principles as to how the society's wealth should be allocated to support such a large mass. This would not become a problem if our societies could keep producing wealth at an accelerating speed so that these societies could support the mass of dependent aged. But this is no longer possible; in fact, the slice of the economic pie available for social programs in advanced nations is now even shrinking. Therefore,

failure to acquire a new philosophy of human values may result in an intensified generational conflict over shares of social wealth. Rosow (1962) was aware of this problem more than twenty years ago and he called it a moral dilemma in an affluent society, meaning the United States. In the meantime our future prospects have darkened rather than brightened. Moving one step further from Rosow's position, I think this is a major historical problem in post-industrial societies.

The question seems simple. Is it right (and if so, how can we convince ourselves) that the value of an individual should not be based on his independence or productivity and that human existence itself is of utmost importance even if it means heavy materialistic sacrifice on the part of the socially productive? Throughout human history, and particularly in this century, the prolongation of human life has been regarded as a yardstick to measure the level of civilization. For instance, the extension of life expectancy has convinced us that our societies are continuously progressing. But I think we are now at a stage to pause and ask ourselves what the quality of human existence or the meaning of prolonged life should be. The questions are simple, but the answers are not ready in our minds.

It is nonetheless certain that a new philosophy of human values should be something which embodies the possibility of equality for the dependent old. Whether it

is in the macro context, such as American or Japanese society, or in the micro context such as a retirement community, the essential nature of the wanted philosophy should be the same. For it is modern civilization itself that is being tested by the growth of the dependent aged population.

In this regard I cannot help thinking that the United States is in a much more difficult position than Japan, because the notion of co-existence with the socially weak and dependent is inherently incompatible with American culture. Of course, this notion is not foreign to the Americans; it is in fact too familiar in America, having always constituted an ideological core of the American dream. Yet American culture, because of its aggressiveness and competitiveness, drives disadvantaged members to peripheral, marginal positions (cf. Henry, 1963; Slater, 1970). Its values prescribe that individualism and independence are of supreme importance and that material abundance achieved in free competition can eventually solve all social problems and bring about happiness for all. It is a culture which integrates non-productive members only in relative terms, relative to full-fledged members. In this sense, American culture is a typical example of our era. To understand this, one need not look at the fate of native Americans, the history of institutionalized slavery, nor discrimination against racial and ethnic minorities, but only look at the treatment that once-productive aged are

receiving (cf. Butler, 1975), in nursing homes particularly (Henry, 1963, Chapter 10; Kayser-Jones, 1981; Laird, 1979; Mendelson, 1975; Vladeck, 1980).

I do not think the task is any easier for Japan. While the degree of compatability between the nature of the culture and the nature of the wanted new philosophy appears to be greater in Japan than in the United States, many core values of American culture represent the driving force of industrialization, and Japan, too, in its process of industrialization, has incorporated some of them. That is, industrialization has caused major social changes which have disrupted Japan's traditional cultural patterns to a great extent. And today's Japanese aged are caught in the midst of these changes.

The focus of this dissertation is on one form of housing for the aged. Since provision of adequate housing is a crucial problem, this study will have both theoretical and practical implications. Moreover, this study provides us with a pivotal perspective to understand the nature of Japanese aging in general. The issue of housing for the elderly not only represents an urgent and critical problem for Japanese society, but it also epitomizes dynamic interactions between the growth of the aged population and the impact of various post World War II social changes.

3. Selection of a Study Site

It should be emphasized that in Japan, there is no congregate housing for the aged, except welfare homes and emerging retirement communities (see Chapter 5). There is no public housing for low income elderly, no Sun City type large scale developments or mobile home parks as in the United States, no local communities with unplanned high densities of old people.⁴

The selection of Fuji-no-sato as the research setting of this study was not random in a statistical sense but intentional and was based on the following six reasons:

(1) Fuji-no-sato is a life-care retirement community.

A life-care community is defined here as a facility which provides, through a certain type of contract signed upon entrance, both residential accommodations specifically designed for the needs of the elderly and skilled nursing care for the duration of the resident's life. There are three types of retirement communities in Japan: the life-care type, the life-guarantee type, and condominiums. Of 31 retirement communities as of September, 1983, 17 (54.8%) are the life-care type, 4 (13.0%) are the life-guarantee type, and 10 (32.2%) are condominiums, respectively (General characteristics of Japanese retirement communities are discussed in Chapter 5). The life-care type and the life-guarantee type are similar in terms of type of service rendered, but the significant difference is that while the

residents in the former pay a monthly fee in addition to an entrance fee, those in the latter make an one-time lump sum payment and are not required to make any additional payments regardless of their length of stay. As one can expect, the life-guarantee type is vulnerable to inflationary and other unexpected changes and the Ministry of Health and Welfare has discouraged this system after one community of this type went into bankruptcy. Thus, it is unlikely that the life-guarantee type will increase in the future. Condominiums are essentially residential facilities for independent elderly and provide only the minimum medical and health care services; the residents have to leave when they become frail and cannot maintain independent living.

Two historical factors in Japan are key background factors for the emergence of retirement communities: (a) changes in the living arrangements of the aged and in consciousness regarding filial expectations and filial responsibilities, and (b) insufficient long-term care system for the dependent aged. Among the three types of retirement communities, the life-care type is the most viable in Japan.

(2) Fuji-no-sato is the only retirement community in Japan which placed strong emphasis on community creation by the residents. This was explicitly advocated from its planning stage, and is expressed in the architectural design and building structures in this community (see Chapter 6).

(3) Fuji-no-sato has an average full time population of around 230-250. Thus, it is a face-to-face community and

appears to be an appropriate size for the residents to get to know one another.

(4) Fuji-no-sato opened in May, 1979, and it had been in operation for three years and four months when I began field work. Since it achieved full occupancy at the end of the first year and the majority of the early residents turned out to be full time residents, I believe the timing of the research is appropriate to focus on the process of community creation.

(5) Fuji-no-sato was built and is managed by the largest non-profit organization in this industry, having four large scale life-care retirement communities whose total number of residents accounts for about 20% of the total population of Japanese retirement communities. However, what is more important than the size of the organization is its basic philosophical position; it has been advocating "new welfare for the middle-income elderly."⁵ Let me explain this concept.

In Japan, the welfare system is at a crossroad today. On the one hand, welfare still means public support for the needy--those who cannot take care of themselves. Strong stigma is attached to those on welfare, particularly to low-income people who receive financial support. On the other hand, welfare means public well-being--people's right to receive various social services, and Japan has been successful in providing many such services. The dual and conflicting meanings of welfare have not been resolved in

the Japanese consciousness yet. In other words, Japan is presently in a transitional stage from the welfare of the pre-World War II period, to the welfare of the welfare state.

Against this background, the builders of Fuji-no-sato advocate the new welfare for the middle-income elderly, which is essentially a welfare based on contract (as discussed in Chapter 8). This philosophy has two presuppositions; one is a greater role of the private sector in supplying essential services and the other is the introduction of appropriate individual payments for the services rendered. In the planning stage of Fuji-no-sato, a guideline was set that the amount of the entrance fee should be within the range of the lump sum retirement payment the average middle-income worker would receive, and that the monthly fee should be covered by the average monthly retirement pension. Although as we will see in Chapter 6, the actual amount of both fees were a little higher than the guideline, the semi-public nature of the organization's policy should be emphasized.⁶ Particularly important for the purpose of this dissertation is the fact that Fuji-no-sato is not intended to house the affluent elderly but old people in the middle-income stratum.

(6) Lastly, Fuji-no-sato is one of the most successful and the best known retirement communities in Japan. It has full occupancy, with sixty to eighty people constantly on the waiting list; whereas many retirement communities are

suffering from low occupancy rates. The organization has a highly sophisticated long-term fiscal management scheme and has been established as an influential leader in this industry by providing management know-hows for new developers. Furthermore, Fuji-no-sato has been covered extensively in the mass media -- major newspapers, various journals, and some T.V. networks, including foreign newspapers such as the New York Times.

4. Methodology

The present research was conducted over the thirteen month period from September 1, 1982 to September 30, 1983. During this period, my family and I lived in Fuji-no-sato. Three methods were employed in this research: participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and unobtrusive measures. The first two methods furnished the bulk of data while the third method was used largely to cross-examine data gathered by the former two methods.

The participant observation technique was originally developed in anthropology to study small communities, usually in preliterate and little known cultures. It is based on a holistic approach in which, instead of focusing on specific pre-conceived issues, the researcher moves into a small community and shares the way of living of the people there. In doing so he aims to interpret and understand the life of the people in its totality and in its cultural

context. That is, anthropological field work is first and foremost characterized by the so-called "emic" approach -- the attempt to understand behavior as the subjects themselves understand it. In addition, it is recommended that field work should be conducted for at least one year, if possible, so that the researcher can observe most ordinary events, as well as seasonable changes and other non-ordinary happenings. In this case I discovered that the winter months are crucial for the staff at the Clinic of Fuji-no-sato, because many residents became sick and need to be hospitalized, including some emergency cases and fatalities. It also turned out that significant developments regarding the role of the Residents Association took place toward the end of the study.

The use of the participant observation technique in gerontology is still limited but steadily growing as illustrated by the works of Johnson (1971), Hochschild (1973), Ross (1977), Meyerhoff (1978), Perkinson (1980), and Kayser-Jones (1981). All these studies are concerned with old people in age-homogeneous settings.

Keith (1980a) points out four major conditions which may necessitate the use of participant observation in the study of aging. They are: (1) when the setting and/or the topic of study is little known or not known at all; (2) when particularly sensitive issues are being studied; (3) when informants are unable or unwilling to report accurately; and (4) when there exists collective or emergent realities.

Needless to say, the first reason is the strongest of all to call for this technique. A study of a retirement community in Japan meets the first and the fourth conditions and to a lesser extent the second condition.

I participated in and made observations on both routine daily activities of the residents and occasional and unscheduled events. My family and I lived in much the same way as the residents at Fuji-no-sato were living, using the same services and having the same limitations and inconvenience. During the first three months I experienced almost every kind of daily activity in order to become familiar with the community and the residents, and thereafter, as I became aware of significant issues, my observations focused on such issues. I also participated in seasonal festivities, planned trips, funeral ceremonies, and so forth. Moreover, my participant observations included care provision at the Clinic, including night shifts, and riding the community's ambulance in both emergency and non-emergency transfers of the residents. Interactions between the staff and the residents and among the staff were also subject to my observations. I attended regular staff meetings and spent quite a bit of time with the staff informally.

Interviewing was another important method in this study. Interviewing was included in my initial research plan in order to supplement the observational data, but I was not sure what content to include in the interviews when

I moved into the community. After three months of observation, I was fairly aware of important issues, on the basis of which I drew up a semi-structured questionnaire. Its purpose was to collect basic information about the residents in general, and, more importantly, to investigate these emerging significant issues in depth. The questionnaire had many open-ended questions because, while I was aware of the problems, I was unable to know by observation what each resident was thinking about them. For one thing, what the residents said when they were with other residents was sometimes quite different from what they told me in private. The free expression of opinions on important issues such as problems at the Clinic or management policies was generally suppressed if the opinions were in disagreement with the public position of the Residents Association. This was because the avoidance of conflict among the residents was one of the strongest norms in their social interactions (discussed in Chapter 11). Here let it suffice to point out that generally speaking, despite the self-constrained manner in public, the residents were remarkably free in disclosing their views in various issues in interviews.

Another reason which made the interview necessary was that since not all full time residents joined group activities, I felt the limitations of participant observation in reaching some residents.

It took an average of two and a half hours to complete

the interview. For some residents who had problems in adaptation I switched to counseling without finishing the questionnaire, and in such cases it was not unusual that I spent four to five hours with them. I followed these maladapted residents as well as new residents throughout the research period. Usually I called the residents one day in advance to make an appointment, and in most cases I met them at their residential units. This fact has a significant meaning because as will be discussed later, interactions among the residents did not usually include mutual visits of their units.

I interviewed 137 residents and had six rejections. Except for one case, the rejections were very passive; they told me that they wished not to be disturbed. The sampling strategy sought to duplicate the community's distribution of residential patterns and marital statuses. It should be added that since the move to a retirement community was not, in many cases, the best choice, interviews would have been very difficult without good rapport.

Unobtrusive measures, or non-reactive measures as they are sometimes called, was the third method in this research. Although the importance of this method and its usefulness in social research are acknowledged by some researchers (cf. Webb et al., 1966), it seems that it is less frequently used, and that its value is underestimated. Perhaps this is due to the fact that except for studies dealing mainly with archival records, it is generally difficult for researchers

to know in advance whether they would have access to unobtrusive data, and this may be particularly true in field research. For instance, when I entered Fuji-no-sato, I was not aware that various records kept by the staff revealed a great deal about the life of the residents; I discovered this more or less haphazardly as I became familiar with the staff's work.

5. Entry into the Setting

I moved to Fuji-no-sato with my family (my wife who was seven months pregnant and a daughter, one year and four months old) on August 31, 1982. We were given a "Type B" unit for our residence, which was a small one-bedroom size (for types of residential units, see Chapter 6). I later found out that our unit was one of the least popular ones among the residents because of its inconvenient location and high humidity. Some residents who had lived in this unit had waited for vacancies and moved to other units. I was also given a space for my office in a large conference room in the administrative building--a room used for the monthly staff meeting and occasionally to host large groups of visitors. Although I was told to make the room available on such occasions (a couple of times per month average), I could use it as my office, keeping books, field data and other materials there. This was the room to which I periodically came back to take notes after observations. I

stayed there when I was not making observations or interviews, and I spent most of the evenings there. As it turned out, this was a strategically good location; I could not only get news about the community quickly here, such as who was sick, hospitalized, or transferred to outside hospitals, the identity of new residents and when they would come, and so forth, but I was also able to get to know the staff well and to listen to their views on their work and on general management issues through informal conversation.

At the regular meeting on the morning following my arrival, September 1, Mr. Baba, the director of the community, introduced me to his staff. Although my research had been approved by the head office of the organization in Tokyo for some time, obviously Mr. Baba was not informed of it until a week before. He appeared a bit offended by this and he gave a very formal and short introduction, saying that I was a graduate student from an university in America and planned to collect data for my dissertation. (In fairness to him, I found out shortly that he was a very energetic and enthusiastic director and once he understood the purpose of my research, he became most cooperative throughout my stay at Fuji-no-sato.) It was the day of the semi-annual disaster evacuation drill, and at the morning meeting Mr. Baba appeared more preoccupied with giving detailed instructions to his staff than with introducing me.

Mr. Baba did not formally introduce me to the residents.

In the first weeks, I tried to make our stay as visible as possible. I spent extensive time with my daughter outdoors and at the Community Center, and whenever I met the residents, I introduced myself to them and tried to memorize their names and faces. We had our meals at the dining hall, took baths at the hot spring bath in the Community Center, and took the shuttle bus for shopping to nearby supermarkets. Each time I met new residents, I explained to them who I was and what I would be doing. It was the end of the busy summer season and many residents thought we were guests of some resident.

Soon I realized that I should have a more effective way of letting our stay and my purpose be known to the residents, because personal introductions were not very effective. I put a self-introductory notice on the announcement board at the Community Center, which was used by the administration to post various service-related messages. I was not certain how effective this means would be, because I had not seen many residents look at the board. However, this method turned out to be highly effective. Many residents whom I had not yet met told me that they had seen my greeting message, as if confirming that I was the person who would live in their community for one year.

Since this incident convinced me of the effectiveness of the announcement board as a means to transmit information to the residents, I took advantage of it four months later when I was about to start interviewing, in order to explain

why I would be meeting them individually and would ask questions about their life in the community. Again it was effective; this gave the residents readiness for my contact.

The type of role taken by the researcher in his field work is important; if he takes a role which is too specific or rigid, it may become difficult for him to pursue certain questions later on as they are developing. Initially I had been asked by a senior staff of the head office in Tokyo to take the roles of staff-consultant and counselor. But since these roles would define my relationships with both the staff and the residents in certain ways, I decided not to take these roles. Instead, I presented myself for both that I was a graduate student from the University of California and that I would be at Fuji-no-sato in order to collect data for my Ph.D. dissertation. I stated this in my greeting message and I told them personally whenever possible.

There appeared to be a readiness among the residents to accept the student researcher. Except for a few residents, their initial reactions to me were very favorable, and there may be three reasons for this. First since Fuji-no-sato was well covered in the mass media and professional journalists visited the place occasionally, I may have been seen as a similar visitor, though my stay was longer. Second, the educational and intellectual levels of the residents were very high for their generation; both men and women had higher than average educations. Many men had been business executives, high ranking government officials, teachers

(including some professors) and so on, whereas a significant number of women were retired teachers, particularly the never-married women. (These will be discussed in detail in Chapter 7.) Therefore, many residents had a clear role image of an advanced student, and I was able to fit myself into that image since, as a Japanese, I knew its freedom and limitations. Third, Japanese culture gives high value to education, so that being a student has positive meaning.

In contrast, there was no such readiness among the staff. Their initial reactions were variable; some being impressed by the fact that I was studying for a Ph.D. at an American university, some appearing somewhat bossy and still others, not knowing how to respond, keeping formal distance. If the residents represented the middle to upper middle class, then the staff, especially the older staff, represented the lower middle class, and I believe that this difference was responsible for their different reactions. Therefore, it was after I spent informal time together with the staff, chatting, drinking, and joining recreational activities that they began telling me their views freely.

A note about the composition of this dissertation. The dissertation consists of twelve chapters. The next chapter is concerned with the theoretical framework of this study. And the remaining ten chapters are divided into three parts. The purpose of Part One is to discuss the background of this study, i.e., why and how retirement communities are now

emerging in Japan. Part Two has two chapters on Fuji-no-sato, focusing on the setting, and the residents. Issues relevant to social integration are discussed in four chapters in Part Three. The last chapter presents conclusions.

Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

Social Interactionism and the emic perspective of Japanese culture constitute the overall theoretical framework of this study. Since Fuji-no-sato is a relatively small, geographically distinct, face-to-face community in which previously unrelated old people began living together and in doing so, got to know one another and established patterns of social interaction, Social Interactionism provides an important theoretical perspective for the present study.

Meanwhile, as discussed in Chapter 1, since the purpose of this study is to depict the social life of the residents at Fuji-no-sato as an example of an age-homogeneous community in a non-Western culture rather than to develop a general theory of social integration of the aged in congregate residential settings, the emic perspective of Japanese culture is essential for this dissertation. The emic perspective is defined as the perspective which seeks to describe "the meaning of something as it is perceived and understood by the participants in a culture, rather than by the observers or outsiders" (Langness, 1974, p. 155). Thus, the emic approach to the study of a culture is intrinsically relativistic, and this is the position of this dissertation.

Traditionally anthropologists studied cultures different from their own and this was believed to be an asset not only to understand other ways of life, but also to

objectify their own cultures. However, it has become prevalent in recent years that anthropologists study their own cultures. There may be advantages and disadvantages in both approaches. Although I am a Japanese, I had graduate training in the United States so that I am familiar with both cultures, and I believe that this gives me an advantage for studying a cultural phenomenon in Japan.

This chapter has three sections. First, I will critically discuss two guiding theories in gerontology. Second, interpersonal relations among the Japanese will be discussed. In the third section, an analytical model of this study will be presented.

1. Two Guiding Theories

There are two theories in gerontology which are the most relevant to the present study. They are the theory of community creation by the aged, proposed by anthropologist Jennie Keith (Ross, 1977; Keith, 1980b), and the theory of adult socialization proposed by sociologist Irving Rosow (1974).

The Community Creation Theory

Ross (1977) studied a process of community creation in a public apartment complex for working class retirees in France. She states her initial question as follows: "the physical fact of new buildings labeled 'retirement village'

or 'adult community' first provoked my curiosity about social life inside these new walls. Could older people living together make the names a reality? Could old age become a basis for community?" (p. 1). From an extensive review of the literature on community, she derived three major themes for the concept of community. They were: territory, we-feeling, and social organization. Territory is space within a physical boundary. We-feeling is, according to Ross, "a sense of distinctiveness, of shared fate, of things in common, in short a feeling that 'we' is the right word to describe a collectivity of individuals" (p. 3). Although Ross did not present her definition of social organization, it is implied that it means patterned and regular social relationships and their structures. Then she divided resident population characteristics thought to promote or hinder the development of we-feeling and social organization into two categories: background factors which existed among the residents prior to their living at the apartment, and emerging factors which developed after the residents moved into the apartment complex. The background factors were further operationalized in terms of seven variables: homogeneity, lack of alternative, investment and irreversibility, material distinctions, social exclusivity, leadership, and size. Similarly, the emergent factors were classified according to six variables: participation in community-wide events and decision-making, the proportions of various kinds of contact between residents,

interdependence, communal unpaid work, threat from outside such as physical safety, and new symbols relevant to the emerging community. Then she hypothesized:

Although presence or absence of a shared territory is a simple either/or judgment, both we-feeling and patterned organization of social life can be evaluated in a more-to-less, higher-to-lower terms. The higher the overall level of these characteristics, including the presence of territory, the greater the degree to which community is present. (p. 6)

Ross then applied this theoretical framework to her one-year ethnographic study of the French setting and concluded, in short, that the residents there did indeed create a highly integrated community of their own.

The logical steps taken by Ross are straightforward and clear-cut. She had an initial question, operationalized both dependent and independent variables on the basis of the literature review, formulated the hypothesis, and tested it in her research. In addition, after the French study, she moved one step further to explore the extent of generalizability of her theory by reviewing relevant studies in gerontology (Keith, 1980b).

Clearly, Ross' approach was more based on an etic perspective than an emic one in spite of her view to the contrary. It may be said that her study was a typical verification of a pre-conceived hypothesis. My approach is different from hers, and it is not the purpose of this dissertation to test her hypothesis at Fuji-no-sato. For considering the facts that there exist distinct differences between American or French culture and Japanese culture, and

that there is a lack of cross-cultural knowledge on social life of old people in congregate residential settings, I think that there is more to lose rather than to gain in the present study by directly testing Ross' hypothesis.

In sum, I disagree with Ross on the importance of the concept of culture. She states:

Although I did my homework about aging in France, my research focus was not on French old people, but on the possible development of a community by old people in an age-homogeneous residence. There is an atmosphere of Frenchness about the descriptions which follow, from the wine bottles on the tables to the inexorable interpretation of daily life in political terms. However, my central conclusion about patterns of community creation and of individual socialization are intended to be distinct enough from this ambiance to provide a basis for general hypotheses about community, old people, and communities of old people in other settings. (Ross, 1977, p. 4)

I argue that without focusing on cultural characteristics of French old people, it is not possible to study a process of community creation by the French elderly.¹ Although I am not familiar with French culture, I wonder if the characteristics of French culture were found only in the wine bottles and the use of political rhetoric in daily life. Furthermore, Ross did not state on what theoretical basis she chose to study a case in France, and especially a public apartment complex for the retired working class. She did not question how these choices might affect the boundaries of her generalizations.

In fact, many variables in Ross' theory appear to be culture bound. It is not certain whether or not, or to what extent her variables are meaningful in the context of

Japanese culture. Perhaps the most serious problem in this regard is the concept of community. While it is perfectly natural to talk about "creating a community" in America or anywhere in the West for that matter, this is not so in Japan. In the West, a community can be conceived as something created by independent individuals, because "individual" is a distinct concept opposing that of community, whereas the Japanese do not have a distinct concept of either community or individual. There is no cultural basis for these concepts in Japan. The closest meaning of community for the Japanese may be something which can not be created but something given, an a priori entity into which one is born, in which one grows older, and in which one eventually dies. Therefore, to say "community creation at a Japanese retirement facility" is awkward in the Japanese cultural context, which in turn implies the necessity of employing the emic perspective. For this reason I stated at the outset that this dissertation is about the Japanese version of community creation by the aged.

Despite these criticisms, I think that two points in Ross' theory have important relevance to the present study. One is the distinction between background characteristics of the residents and emergent characteristics, and the other is the theoretical focus on interaction. Ross states:

The social rather than spatial aspects of living together are central to other discussions of community. In this regard, community implies patterned, as opposed to random, social contacts. Mutual expectations about

interaction, and the interactions themselves, are regular enough to be identified as roles. The boundaries of various groups and categories are mutual knowledge. Community members share general norms about the way people ought to behave. . . . (Ross, 1977, pp. 5-6)

Although like community, the concept of role has a different meaning in Japan, her focus on interaction among the residents is correct.

The Adult Socialization Theory

Rosow's theory of adult socialization (1974) may be divided into three parts: a general sociological theory of adult socialization to old age, its application to American society, and the viable possibility of old age community in American society, which is a deductively gained theoretical conclusion. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss all three parts in detail, but I will briefly examine their relevances to this study.

Since his previous work (Rosow, 1967), a landmark study in gerontology, which demonstrated empirically that the geographic concentration of the aged could facilitate the social integration of old people, Rosow's ultimate theoretical interest appears to be the issue of the social integration of the aged in general. Social integration, according to Rosow, "locates persons in a system and patterns their relationship to others" (1974, p. 28). He argues that it can be studied in two ways, from the viewpoint of system or of members. His theoretical focus is

on the members of the society rather than the system, and he theorizes that the individual's integration into the system is reflected in three dimensions: social values, social roles, and group membership (which is further divided into formal organizations and informal groups, friendships, etc).

Rosow states:

These (three sets of factors) provide the ties that bind social norms into institutions, structure social intercourse, place a person in society and order his relation to others. Thereby, they provide the means and substance of integration. (Rosow, 1974, p. 29)

In order to extend the study of social integration, Rosow later focuses his inquiry on the issue of socialization to old age. For as he states, "The general categories or referents of socialization and integration are the same, so that socialization becomes one major mechanism of integration" (1974, p. 28).

Rosow applies his theoretical model to current American society and comes to the conclusion that in the United States, socialization to old age is intrinsically problematic because the society does not provide viable roles or norms for its aging members, so that they cannot be effectively socialized to an aged role. Because of youth-oriented age norms, he argues, the American elderly are kept alienated from the integrational mechanism of their society.

On the basis of this conclusion and the supposition that American "basic institutions continue to devalue and exclude the elderly and [assuming] that socialization to an aged role is desirable" (Rosow, 1974, p. 155), he proposes a

theoretical alternative which may have immense practical implications: the insulation of old people from other age groups and their increased association with age peers may produce a social milieu in which the aged can generate new norms and new roles, thereby making social integration possible, even though such an integration tends to be confined to the immediate living environment.

Rosow further argues that there are two prerequisite conditions for such a possibility. They are:

First, when the (aged) members are also socially homogeneous on factors other than age, notably social class, race, ethnicity, and marital status. In other words, the factors that normally govern voluntary social groupings and spontaneous association. . . . The second condition favorable to such groups is large concentration of similar elderly. (Rosow, 1974, pp. 160-161, original emphases)

He also specifies eight functions of age-peers with homogeneous social backgrounds, which are conducive to social integration of the aged in age-concentrated settings. They are: group support, new group memberships, new role sets, role specification, positive reference groups, insulation of members, qualified role models, and new self-images.

It is important to note that Rosow's theory has been independently confirmed by several studies; most notably, Hochschild's (1973) study of Merrill Court, a small apartment in northern California, which was housed mostly by widowed working class, and Johnson's (1971) study of a mobile home park in California. Furthermore, Ross' study in

France (1977) supports Rosow's theory.

Since Rosow's theory is not only a general sociological theory of socialization in adult life, but it is also an unique analysis of American culture, three steps will be necessary in the course of this dissertation to determine the utility of his theory for Fuji-no-sato: (a) to examine the cross-cultural validity of the concepts "norm," "role," and "peer group"; (b) to examine the concepts of normlessness and rolelessness as applied to the Japanese aged, and; (c) to examine the social significance of age-homogeneous communities for the Japanese elderly.

With regard to the first question, it appears that all three concepts have different meanings in Japanese culture from those in American culture. Norms are here defined as social standards against which one's behavior is to be evaluated. In America, norms have universalistic prescriptions and proscriptions; each norm has the same meaning regardless of a given situation. In contrast, the Japanese perception of norms are particularistic and more flexible; the same norm may be variably observed by the Japanese depending on the nature of a given situation or on the nature of the involved interpersonal relationships. This point will be further discussed shortly.

While a role is conceptualized as something that is played by individuals in America, for the Japanese a role is not distinctly differentiated by its player. The Japanese do not have a distinct perception of the individual as an

acting unit independent of roles he plays. If we divide roles into two kinds--formal, institutional roles and informal, non-institutional roles, it is the formal, institutional roles--namely familial roles and occupational roles--that tend to determine the Japanese sense of self throughout their life course. Referring to this point, Kiefer discusses the meaning of role for elderly Japanese immigrants in California as follows:

the psychological process of disengagement requires a perception of one's self as fundamentally distinct from one's social roles--a perception that is alien to the issei (i.e., Japanese immigrants). Behind the Westerner's perception of himself as purposefully engaged in and thus potentially disengaged from his intimate social relations lies a long history of philosophic individualism. . . . The issei, however, cannot disengage from his social roles because he is those roles. (Kiefer, 1974, p. 207)

Meanwhile, DeVos uses the term "role narcissism" to characterize the importance of formal roles for the Japanese.

For some Japanese the occupational role completely takes the place of any meaningful spontaneous social interaction. Tradition of role dedication still can lead to what appears to be an extraordinary capacity for self-sacrifice, such as, in the very recent past, that of soldiers going to certain death. . . . Role dedication can be viewed as the core of the two chief Japanese traditional virtues of loyalty and endurance. (DeVos, 1973, p. 13)

This in turn indicates the relative meaninglessness of informal roles for the Japanese. Whether it is familial, occupational, or some other formal roles, the Japanese have a great difficulty in establishing social relationships without having formal, institutional roles, precisely

because the formal roles are the core of their perception of themselves. This is a very important theoretical point to be emphasized because roles at a Japanese retirement community will be markedly different from traditional formal roles in the magnitude of their meaningfulness for the residents. For instance, provided that roles at a retirement community may be mostly informal ones, what this means for the Japanese residents may be very different from its meanings for American residents. Due to the distinct perception of self as an individual, American elderly at a retirement community are thought to be more skillful than their Japanese counterparts in generating informal roles and eventually in establishing patterns of social interaction.

The above discussion has already clarified to some extent basic differences regarding the meaning of peer group between American and Japanese elderly. While viable functions of peer group are highly characteristic of social relations among Americans of all ages, this is not so for the Japanese. Japanese social relations are vertically organized on the basis of formal roles. There, peer group becomes synonymous to a small group of intimate friends, whose functions are generally auxiliary to the vertical, formal relations.

The second question, i.e., "what are the general characteristics of socialization to old age in Japan?" will be discussed in Chapter 4 and to a lesser extent in Chapter 5. To state the conclusion first, while it is the youth-

oriented age norms that are problematic for socialization to old age in the United States, it is the attitudes and values of one's family that are critical for socialization to old age in Japan. While normlessness for proper behaviors of the aged and rolelessness for the aged prevail in American society, the socialization mechanism for old age in Japan is the norms and roles of grandparenthood within the institution of family. Although generally speaking the age norms are more distinct in Japan than in the United States, socialization to old age in Japan tends to become problematic for those aged who are outside of the family institution, such as the never-married aged, divorcees, those without children, and even the aged with children but who are living separately. Furthermore, as will be discussed in Part One, the traditional socialization mechanism for old age is growing increasingly problematic in Japan. Therefore, there exists distinct cultural differences between Japan and the United States with regard to the nature of socialization to old age.

The third question is: what social significance do age-homogeneous communities have for the Japanese elderly and for Japan? Rosow argues that due to the strong youth-oriented age norms, socialization to old age in the United States is intrinsically problematic and he proposes a theoretical alternative that insulation of old people may give rise to a social milieu with necessary norms and roles for social integration. Put another way, Rosow thinks that

in America social integration of the aged may become possible in micro-contexts, such as in age-homogeneous environments for the elderly. Since the background conditions are different between the two societies, such environments have a different social significance in Japan and in the United States. It is assumed that the social significance of retirement communities in Japan lies in the fact that they are a completely new alternative to traditional but now problematic family care of the aged. The significance should be further emphasized for those aged who do not have their own families. Therefore, it is in this context that the issue of social integration at a retirement community in Japan becomes important theoretically and practically.

2. Characteristics of Japanese Interpersonal Relations

This section considers cultural characteristics of interpersonal relations among the Japanese, that aspect of Japanese culture which is the most relevant to the purpose of this dissertation. I can best begin this task by trying to make my own biases as conscious as possible. When I first read studies of such groups as Merrill Court (Hochschild, 1973), Les Floralties in France (Ross, 1977), or Palmore's work on Japanese aging (Palmore, 1975), I found myself puzzled. I wondered why Hochschild states, "one reason I have written this book is that these forty-three

people (i.e., the residents at Merrill Court) were not isolated and not lonely. They are part of a community I did not expect to find" (p. xiv). Or, I asked myself why Ross concluded that "probably the most surprising finding of my study was that, except for their being old, little about these old people was surprising. Their friendships, fights, and love affairs, their in-jokes and strategies for coping with common problems are only striking because we don't expect old people to go on living like everyone else" (p. xi). Similarly, I was curious why Palmore made vehement, rather off-point criticisms against Plath's view on Japanese aging (Plath, 1972)² by stating, "his (i.e., Plath's) picture is a gloomy distortion of the reality enjoyed by most Japanese elders" (p. 129).

The point I am making here is twofold. First of all, I perceived that all these authors were highly emotional about their work. Although I could understand cognitively why they put this emotional energy into their work, it was difficult for me as an observer of American culture to share their affective reactions. For if these American researchers explicitly or implicitly held the assumption that old people are supposed to be lonely, alone, and not like people of younger ages; or that their social integration in Japan is an astonishing finding, my assumption as a Japanese was quite different; like any Japanese I thought that the Japanese elderly are supposed to take the roles of grandparents and to be integrated into

their families. This issue is a perplexing problem in anthropology, i.e., the ethnocentric bias of the researcher. Secondly, the ethnocentric bias may be found not only in these works, but also in mine. Part One of this dissertation will demonstrate how the common assumption of the Japanese vis-a-vis their old people deviates from reality. And, since I am a Japanese and once held the assumption common to my culture, my emotional loading, regardless of its direction and intensity, may discount the viability of peer group functions among the residents at Fuji-no-sato, compared with, say, an American researcher who might study this community. Note again that here I am discussing the deepest level of cultural influence, that is, the researcher's subconscious assumption from which I do not think that even a well-trained, self-reflective researcher may be able to escape.

Individualism vs. Contextualism

It should be emphasized that the key to understanding Japanese culture, be it social organization, interpersonal relations, or psycho-social characteristics, is to understand the Japanese family. It is not an exaggeration to state that the core of Japanese culture is the family. Hamaguchi (1982) succinctly compares fundamental differences in interpersonal relationships between Americans and the Japanese. According to him, while American interpersonal relationships are based on individualism, those of the

Japanese are governed by what he named "contextualism."

Individualism has three components: ego-centeredness, self-reliance, and regard for interpersonal relations as a means. Each of these should be briefly explained. Ego-centeredness is an orientation toward the development and maintenance of a consistent ego or ego identity in the personality system. It signifies a belief that for Americans, the independent ego of the individual is an important conceptual unit in all social relations. Self-reliance means an autonomous attitude--that one's needs in life should be fulfilled by oneself and that the individual autonomy should be one's ego-ideal. Americans, therefore, are apt to avoid becoming dependent on others and unwilling to accept the dependencies of others. Finally, the regard for interpersonal relations as a means is a way of conceptualizing the fact that the purpose of relations among independent individuals is to establish reciprocal give-and-take relations, and that the interpersonal relations themselves are the means for this purpose.

In contrast, according to Hamaguchi, contextualism has the opposite attributes to individualism. Its three components are: mutual dependence, mutual reliance, and regard for interpersonal relations as an end in themselves. Mutual dependence signifies the Japanese view that since one cannot live alone, it is human nature to help one another. Dependence is not something which should be avoided but it should be actively sought mutually, a process which in turn

reinforces the ties of the involved parties. Mutual reliance, which is based on the belief that human nature is fundamentally trustful, is the pre-requisite for mutual dependence; without mutual trust, mutual dependence is impossible to achieve, nor can interpersonal relations be maintained over time. The regard for interpersonal relations as ends in themselves, therefore, emphasizes the view that the relations which are based on mutual trust should not be judged instrumentally, and that the prolongation of the relations itself is of utmost importance regardless of the short-term, pragmatic values of the relations.

Thus, Japan is not an individualistic society in the sense that the United States is. While the individual is the overriding conceptual unit in social interactions among Americans, it is the quality of interpersonal relations that is the overriding conceptual unit in Japanese social interactions. Although Hamaguchi's contrast may be a little too extreme, this point cannot be over-emphasized because it signifies a fundamental difference in the two cultures.

For instance, the Westerner's common misunderstanding of Japanese is that since they appear group-oriented, they have weak or immature egos, are not independent, or are not autonomous. For Americans, group-orientation tends to be associated with such negative meanings as those embodied in collectivism, authoritarianism, or even totalitarianism, because for them the notion of group is only conceivable in

terms of the notion of individual; group is a social entity which is created by independent and autonomous individuals and there the members have not only the right to join it but also the right to withdraw their memberships from it when/if such an action becomes necessary. On the other hand, for the Japanese, the group is not something to be created by individuals, nor is it something from which they can withdraw themselves willfully; the group is something given, an a priori entity, which nevertheless can exercise "joint autonomy" (Wagatsuma, 1982, p. 207).

The Model of Japanese Interpersonal Relations

Japanese behavior is often characterized as situationalistic, particularistic, or shame-oriented. Thus, it is seen that the Japanese do not behave with logical consistency, or that they do not have universal standards of behavior. This is another misunderstanding of Japanese behavior that Westerners often have. This is because while the frame of reference for one's behavior is on the acting individual in the West, for the Japanese it is the social unit with whom they are engaged in a given interaction. The Japanese tend to determine their behaviors in terms of the quality of their relationships or the degree of mutual social and psychological significance of their relationships. This does not mean that the Japanese do not have general standards or norms, but that depending on the quality of relationships, norms are variably observed.

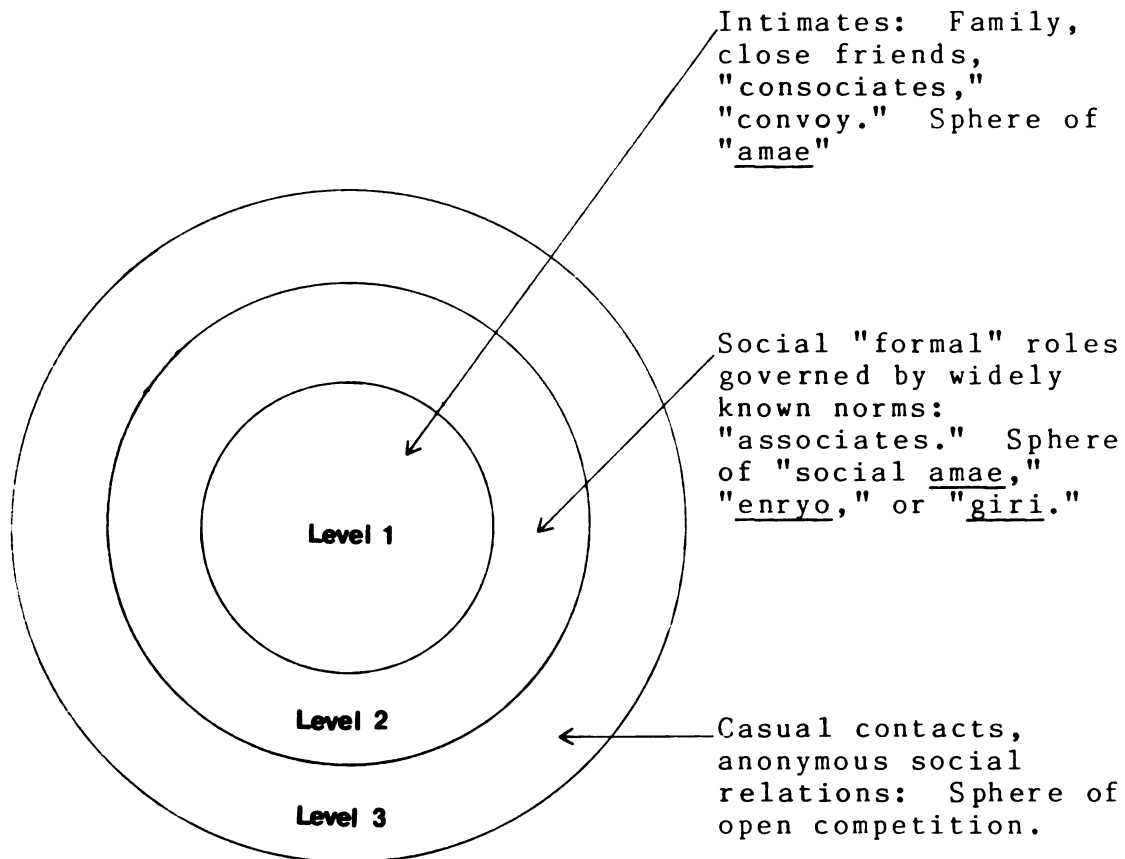
There exists another dimension of norms which prescribe varying degrees of flexibility as to the actual extent to which general normative standards should be upheld.

To elaborate this point further, Figure 2-1 is presented. I will call this the depth model of Japanese interpersonal relationships.³ This is a general model for understanding certain characteristics of Japanese interpersonal relationships. It consists of three levels, each of which represents a different level of importance for the actor. The deepest level is in the core of the model and the shallowest level is the outer edge of level three. The first level includes socially and psychologically significant others, such as one's family members, close friends, close colleagues at work, or any other people with whom one can be off guard. Needless to say, the core of this level is one's parental relations and one's sibling relations. Or, it may be said that people in this level are one's confidantes.

Level three refers to the world of strangers, the kind of people to whom one is totally unrelated, or with whom one has very superficial relations, such as people on the same train, waiters at restaurants, etc. Anonymity prevails in this level because there is no need to disclose one's identity.

Lying in between, level two contains a broader range of people, from those who are almost strangers to the vast number of people one is socially engaged with. The second

Figure 2-1: The Depth Model of Japanese Interpersonal Relationships



level is the world of one's social relationships which are usually regulated by role-specific, formal relationships, and in which one's identity is expected to be known.

The Japanese behave differently depending on these three levels. For instance, while they may behave very politely when they are with the people in the second level, the same individuals may behave very impolitely or rudely to the people in the third level because they need not to worry about negative repercussions from such behavior. There is a Japanese proverb, "one can wipe off shameful acts when one is traveling," and this is a well-known fact in Japan.

The utility of this model lies in the fact that it helps us to understand some key, emic concepts in Japanese interpersonal relationships. For instance, Doi (1973) mentions that one can indulge in amae,⁴ the need for dependency, which is an unique Japanese psychological characteristic, when one is with the people in level one. The prototype of amae is, of course, in parent-child relationships. Since people in this level are mutually so important, their selves, as it were, become mutual property and unseparable. Here, one can cast off his social clothes. First level relationships outside the family, such as intimate friendships, are generally evolved from the role-specific social relationships in second level. Thus, besides one's family members, those in first level are united informally and voluntarily.

In contrast, second level relationships are the stage

on which one has to wear his social clothes. Here, the key concept is enryo, "restraint" or "holding back," which is chiefly used as a negative yardstick in measuring the intimacy of human relationships" (Doi, 1973, p. 38). Since this is the level in which one's formal role relationships dominate, one needs to exert careful control on one's behavior, continuously assessing the quality of the involved relationships and keeping appropriate distance by enforcing enryo. The use of amae in this level requires sensitive and delicate skill in assessing the changing quality of the relationships. As Doi pointed out, the Japanese believe that relationships without the need of enryo are ideal. Like too much enryo, too much amae may also bring about negative consequences in the relationships. Level two relations may, therefore, be called the world of social amae. Enryo needs not to be enforced in either first level or third level relations, because intimate non-kin relations in the former are an outgrowth of second level whereas the latter is so insignificant for oneself.

Looking at this model from the standpoint of social support networks, level one relationships are the strongest support network, whereas second level relationships cannot be so easily mobilized because one tends to refrain from seeking help from the people in this level. For, once a person receives help from level two people, he will feel giri, psycho-social indebtedness, which one feels compelled to discharge quickly. Third level relationships are not

part of one's support network.

As it should be clear, this model is not static. Although the basic structure of the relationships may be stable, the real value of this model is that it can be seen from a developmental perspective. One's relationships to others can develop in either direction; a stranger can become a member of second level, then gradually evolve into first level as time goes on. Likewise, even a parent-child relationship could become alienated and lose the meaningfulness of first level relations. The definition of a given relationship has to be made mutually and it is essential that both parties share the same perception as to the quality or depth of their relationship. In order to be skillful in this kind of perceptual bargaining, the Japanese are socialized through the child-rearing process, at school, and at work.

This perspective is the theoretical backbone in Plath's recent work (Plath, 1980). He states:

Growth then becomes in part a property of others, particularly of those who are one's consociates. The term may be an unfamiliar one, but it is apt here. It derives from the work of Alfred Schutz and the phenomenologists. If 'associates' are persons you happen to encounter somewhere, sometime, 'consociates' are people you relate with across time and in some degree of intimacy. They are friends, lovers, kinsmen, colleagues, classmates. (Plath, 1980, p. 8)

Consociates are, therefore, essentially the people in the first level of our model while associates are those in the second level. Another important factor regarding the developmental aspects of the model, which Plath also

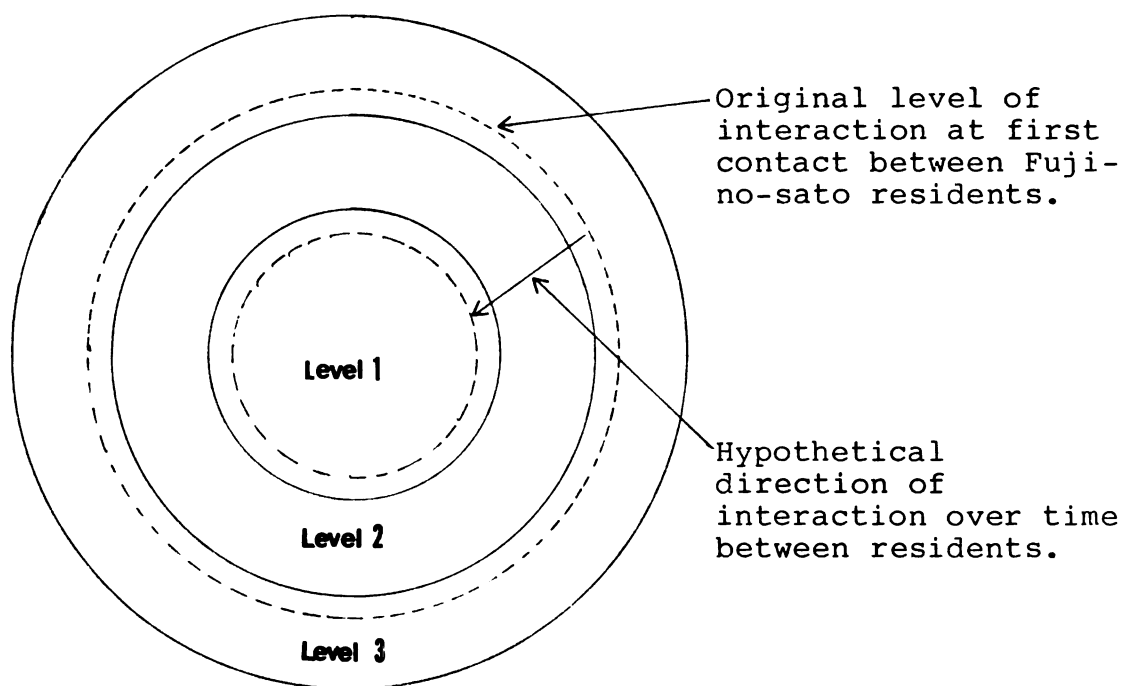
mentions, is the duration of time necessary to evolve first level relationships. Since it is of utmost importance for the Japanese to perpetuate interpersonal relationships, the duration usually means several decades, overlapping a substantial part of one's life course. Plath refers to this by using the term, "convoys" (pp. 224-226).

3. Analytical Model of this Study

On the basis of the discussion thus far, I have developed the analytical model of this study (Figure 2-2). It is an application of the model of Japanese interpersonal relations, and it is used here developmentally. Provided that the residents at Fuji-no-sato were strangers until they moved to the community, it can be theorized that relationships among the residents would develop, as shown in the arrow in Figure 2-2, from the outer edge of level two toward and possibly into level one. How deeply their relationships move in this direction is the focus of my analysis. It is hypothesized that at the beginning, the residents would employ norms and maintain distance, both appropriate to the nature of their perceived relationship shown in the beginning point of the arrow, and that as they get to know one another they may shift or adjust both norms and distance according to the changing definition of their relationships.

Within this "emic" analytical model, social integration

Figure 2-2: The Analytical Model of This Study



at Fuji-no-sato will be studied. However, I do not operationalize the concept of community as a dependent variable, but simply assume that Fuji-no-sato is a type of community that functions as a context, limiting the kinds of possible social relationships. Viewing Fuji-no-sato as an independent social system, and following Rosow's definition, I define social integration as the locating of individuals in a system and the patterning of their relationships with others. Likewise, socialization is defined as an important mechanism of integration--the process of development of patterned social interaction. Norms refer to social standards against which one's behavior is to be evaluated. Roles generally mean constellations of rights and duties--meaning both formally recognized roles like elected offices in the Residents Association (which are very limited) and the much more important informal roles evolved in neighboring, friendship, etc.

It should be pointed out that there are four factors, all interrelated, which would hinder the development of "deep" interpersonal relations among the residents at Fuji-no-sato. (1) While most middle class Americans of all ages are skillful in starting new relationships, this is not so for the Japanese. Although to the Japanese, American relationships seem to be too shallow and sometimes even ephemeral, it is nonetheless true that when new people meet each other, Americans have better social skills in starting new interactions than the Japanese. (2) It is difficult in

Japanese interpersonal relations to conceptually differentiate emotional needs from social needs. The Japanese generally expect both kinds of need in their relationships with others. Thus, it is necessary for acquaintances to keep both psychological and sociological perspectives on their developing relationships. While the Japanese may be less skillful than Americans in building new relationships, the Japanese expect and actually attain deeper levels of relationships than Americans. (3) There is a time factor. As Plath pointed out, it takes considerable time for the Japanese to develop solid level one relationships. It is generally true that the depth of the relationships correlate with the duration of the relationships. This may be a serious obstacle for the residents at Fuji-no-sato to develop deeply meaningful relationships among themselves. (4) Last, but in no sense least, level one relationships, except for family relationships, are usually informal outgrowths of level two relations, which are formal role-specific relations. In other words, the Japanese develop level one relations only with those in second level who have some basis for mutual intimacy, be it life-style, thinking, hobbies, or whatever, and not with everyone or anyone in that level.

Fuji-no-sato is very unusual in the context of Japanese culture because the residents' relationships do not begin as role-specific formal relationships. The residents do not seem to have the prerequisite, as it were, for the possible development of level one relations.

PART ONE

AGING IN JAPAN: AN OVERVIEW

Chapter 3. Demography and Income

This chapter discusses two aspects of Japanese aging which are most relevant to this dissertation: demographic characteristics and income sources.

1. Demographic Characteristics

The aging of Japanese society has three distinct features. First, the growth of the aged population is recent and rapid. Second, the proportion of the elderly is projected to reach a higher level than in any other nation. Third, as an inevitable consequence, the proportion of "old-old" (Neugarten, 1975) is expected to be quite significant.

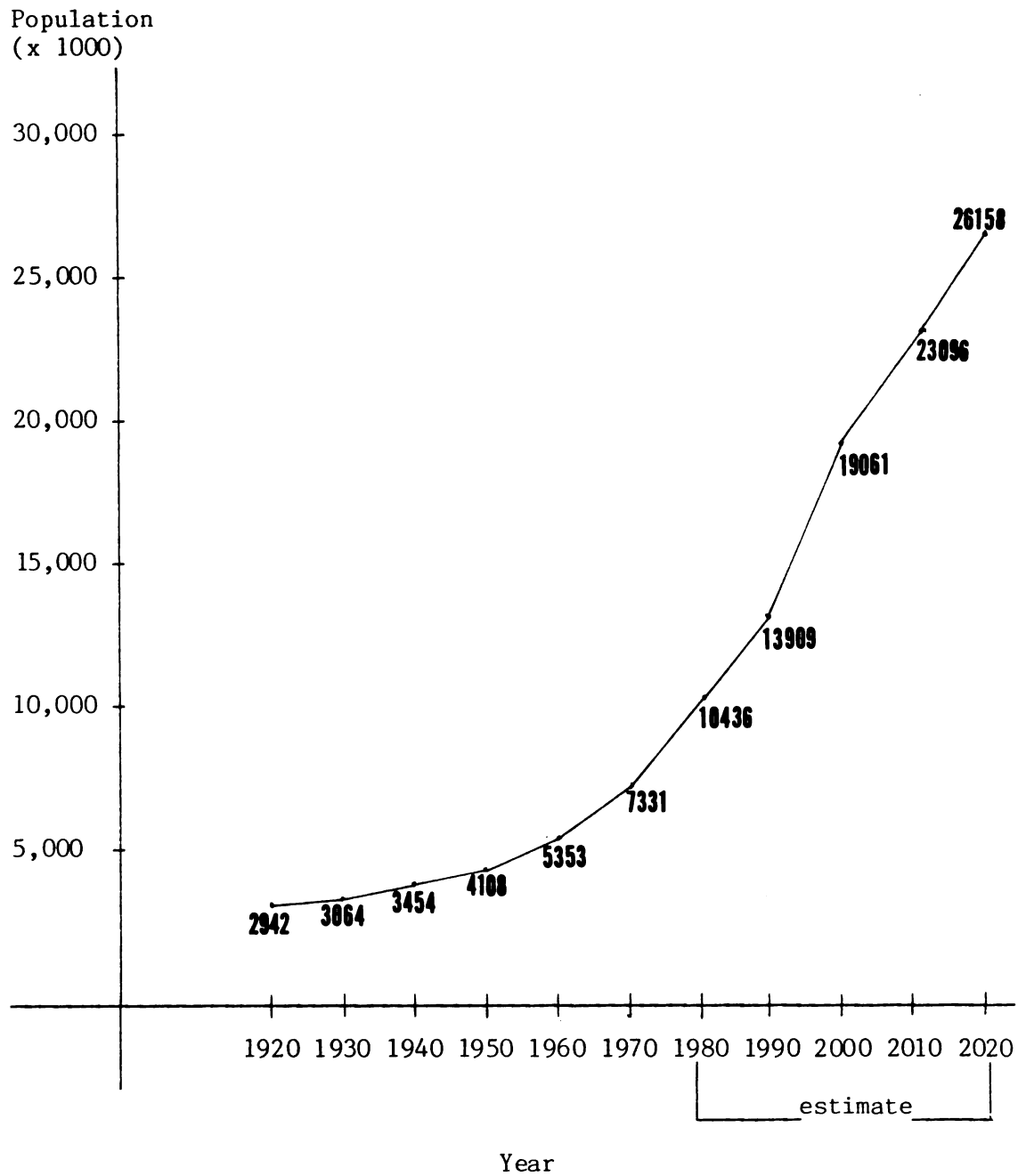
The proportion of over-65 members in the total population is an index which is often used to judge the aging of a given nation. It was fairly stable in Japan in the pre-World War II era; it was 5.25% in 1920 when the first national census was taken, 4.76% in 1930, and 4.80% in 1940, respectively. The first post-War census in 1950 reported 4.94% and a decade later in 1960, it was 5.70%. The sharp increase of the percentage began around that time and has been continuing with accelerating speed; it reached 7.07% in 1970 and in 1980, 8.88%. Furthermore, it is projected to become 11.01% in 1990, 14.26% in the year 2000, going up to the all time high 18.81% in 2020, exceeding the projected highest levels of major Western nations. Figure

3-1 illustrates these increases in terms of the growth of the actual number of those over 65 years old. As shown clearly, Japan is now at the threshold of the explosion of the aged population. From another angle, Figure 3-2 shows the prolonged life expectancy and the average years left to live for those 65 years old. For instance, the life expectancy for the Japanese has risen dramatically in the period 1947-1978, for women from 53.96 years to 78.33 years and for men from 50.06 years to 72.97 years. As far as life expectancy goes, Japan is now leading the world. In addition, in the same period, the average years left to live for those 65 years old have jumped from 12.22 years to 17.48 years for women, and from 10.60 years to 14.40 years for men.

The percentage of those over 75 years old, or the old-old, in the total aged population was 24.9% in 1920 and remained relatively stable until 1960 when it grew to 30.4%. However, it is estimated to reach 39.1% in 1990. Since the old-old are the most dependent in many ways, the impact of their increase will be quite enormous for Japanese society.

The speed of the aging of Japanese society is compared with major Western nations in terms of the number of years taken for the proportion of the over-65 population to rise from 5% to 12%. France took 170 years, Sweden 105 years, West Germany 75 years, and Great Britain 60 years. But it will be only 45 years for Japan.

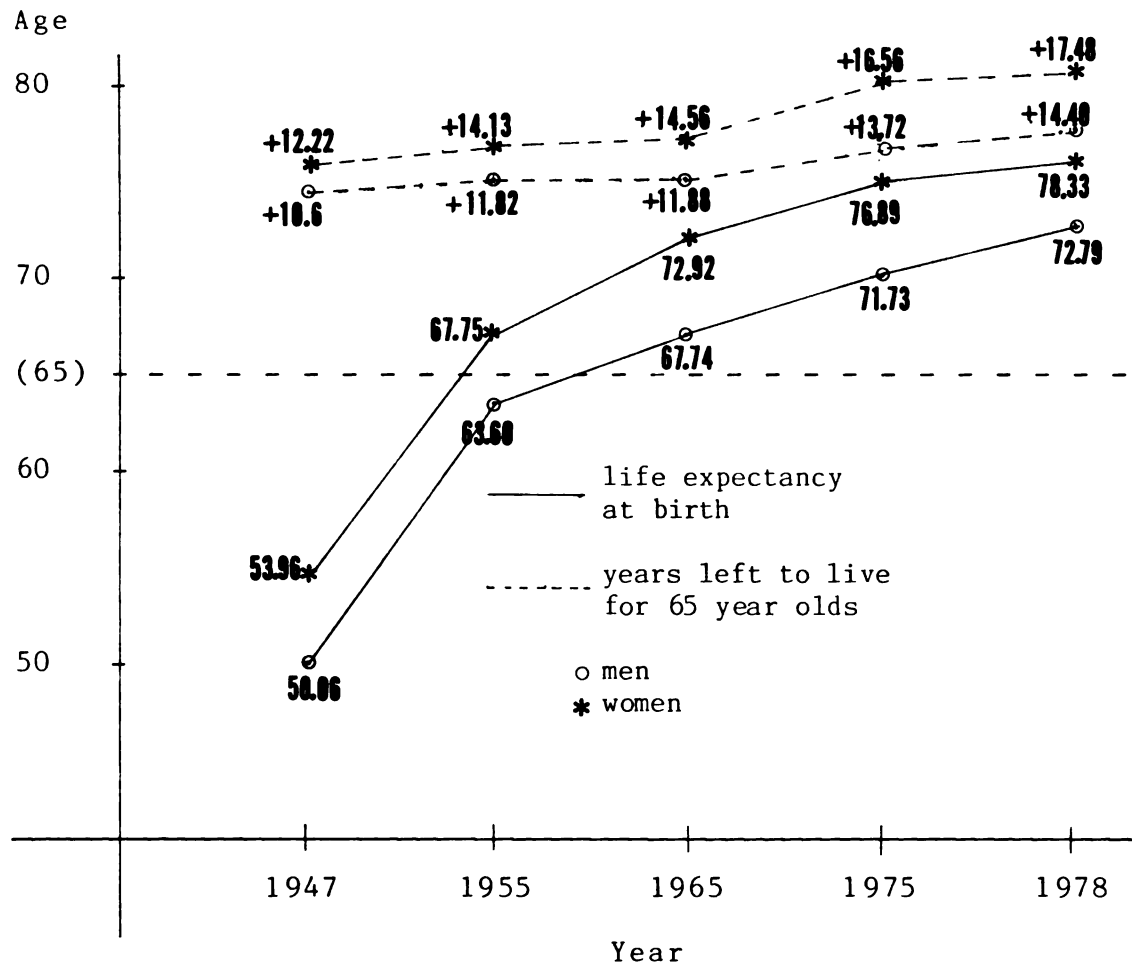
Figure 3-1: Population Over 65 Years Old by Decade, 1920-2020



Source: National Census, Prime Minister's Office (1920-1970)
Ministry of Health and Welfare (1980-2020)

(Prime Minister's Office, p. 2, 1980)

Figure 3-2: Life Expectancies at Birth and
Years Left to Live for 65 Year Olds



Source: Vital Statistics, Ministry of Health and Welfare
(Rōjin Fukushi Kaihatsu Sentā, 1982, p. 138)

The impact of these demographic changes in Japanese society can be seen from the standpoint of both the society and the individual. The nation needs to develop social services for the aged in a very short period of time. Many programs have been proposed and instituted and some have failed. New strategies are being sought, and some successful ones from the clients' view are being curtailed because they cost too much. No one knows where such trail-and-error will lead Japan, or how successfully Japan will be able to cope with the problems. Yet everyone is aware that aging has become a serious social problem. Meanwhile the demographic changes took place within the lifetimes of those now over 65. They were born and grew up in the period when aging was not a significant social problem. They survived many wars, and are growing older while the society is struggling with the aging problem. Furthermore, as will be discussed in the next chapter, the impact of demographic changes is markedly amplified by drastic social changes which also occurred within their life time.

2. Sources of Income

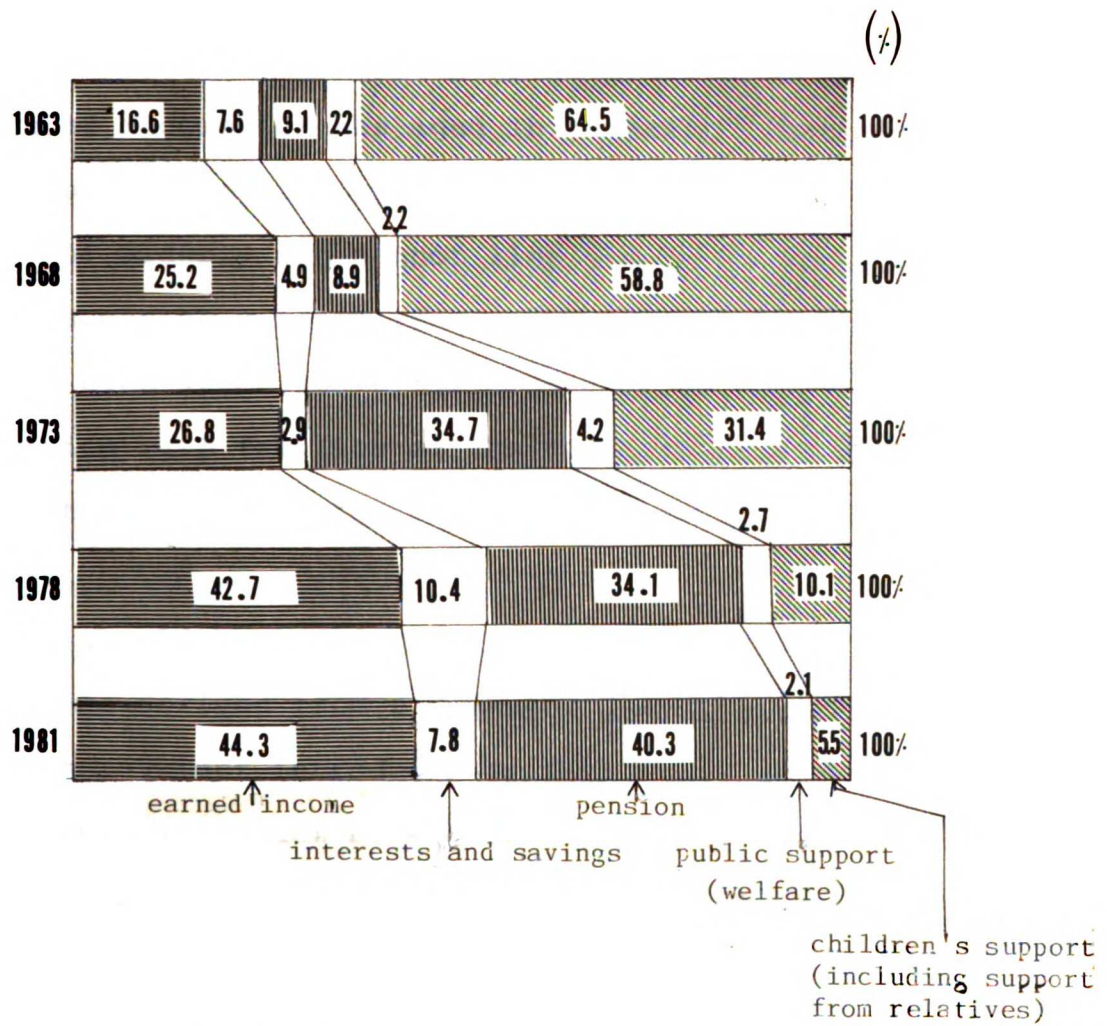
One of the most important factors for the well-being of the elderly, especially those who are relatively healthy, is adequate income. Japan has become one of the strongest economic powers in the world; its G.N.P. is now the second largest in the free world, after only the United States.

The standard of living for the Japanese has greatly improved in recent decades. How does the nation's wealth affect income structures of the aged, particularly those of the middle class elderly? Indeed, these are the people who have most contributed not only to the reconstruction of post-War Japan but also to its current economic strength.

The main sources of income and their changing importance are illustrated in Figure 3-3. This is the nation-wide average of elderly households--households consisting of either a man over 65 years old and his wife over 60 years old, or of such a couple with unmarried children under 18 years old. It is quite evident that the elderly household has attained significant financial independence in the period of 1963-1981. Earned income has risen from 16.6% in 1963 to 44.3% in 1981, and even more dramatically the role of retirement pensions has become equally significant, rising from only 9.1% in 1963 to 40.3% in 1981. In contrast, support from children and/or relatives has fallen markedly from 64.5% in 1963 to 5.5% in 1981. Public welfare support has been fairly low throughout this period. Therefore, earned income and retirement pensions are two dominant sources of income for elderly households, jointly accounting for 84.6% of the total income in 1981.

One should note, however, that households of these types are still the minority, because the majority of the Japanese aged are living with families of their children

Figure 3-3: Income Sources of Elderly Households



Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare
(Rōjin Fukushi Kaihatsu Sentā, 1982, p. 17)

(see Chapter 4). Yet as we will see in the next chapter, the number of independent elderly households has been noticeably increasing and is expected to keep increasing in coming years.

The Japanese retirement pension system must be briefly explained here because the pension has become an important source of income for the aged in general.¹ Due to the relatively short history of the system, there are still a number of elderly who cannot live solely on their pensions, and this may be a major reason why the Japanese tend to keep working even after their first retirement, and/or why they are living with families of their children (of course, there are cultural reasons for co-living which will be discussed later).

It should be added that the sudden jump in the percentage derived from retirement pensions in 1973 was due to an improvement introduced in that year, namely automatic adjustment of pension benefits to inflation.

Let us compare the average monthly amounts of retirement pension in four major pension systems. As of March 1981, retirees from municipal government are getting the highest amount, \$613,² followed by \$575 for retired national government workers; whereas it is \$421 for retired company workers. The amount of the national pension is small, only \$92, which is largely attributed to the short history of this system. If both husband and wife are on the national pension system, their combined amount will be

double that, i.e., \$184, still a far smaller amount than in the other three systems.

The Japanese standard for pensions is almost equivalent to the American standard. The average monthly amount of a worker's pension in 1981 is about 44.2% of the average monthly salary, which is virtually the same as the 44% given by O.A.S.D.I in the United States in 1980.

Another significant factor is that the Japanese workers can receive a lump sum payment upon retirement. Although the company pension system is gradually being developed, particularly among larger corporations, the traditional retirement payment is widely prevalent. According to a study by the Ministry of Labor, a college graduate who had worked for 25 consecutive years for a company (1,000 or more employees) received on average \$47,754 in 1979. This was approximately 29 times his monthly salary. Here too, public workers receive larger retirement payments than other workers. For instance, Musashino-city in Tokyo is known to pay the highest retirement payment in Japan. A low-rank, non-managerial worker in this city can receive, after 30 years work, \$166,667 when he retires.³ Needless to say, the retirement payment is an important source of one's preparation for economic security in old age.

In sum, it appears reasonable to conclude that today's Japanese aged are indeed getting their share from the nation's great wealth. However, whether or not that share is adequate is a political question, but this is not our

question here. What is more important for this dissertation is the fact that many Japanese elderly, particularly those in the middle class, are now able to achieve financial independence without traditional support from their adult children. Perhaps it is the first time that such a large number of old people have attained financial independence in Japan. Furthermore, this is taking place when the traditional system of family care of the aged is becoming increasingly problematic. Therefore, financial independence may give the Japanese aged more control in negotiating and preparing for their old age security.

Chapter 4. Consequences of Social Change

Japan has undergone drastic social changes in the life time of the current Japanese elderly. They fought World War One and the Ten Year War, as it is known in Japan, the decade of war which includes the Sino-Japanese War and World War Two. Until 1945, war was part of daily life among the Japanese, and they experienced devastating defeat and massive destruction. Then they experienced Japan's reconstruction and rise to become one of the most powerful economic forces in the world. A 70 year old man, for instance, was only 32 years old when Japan was defeated in 1945; his generation not only fought the wars but also contributed to the reconstruction and the contemporary prosperity. Moreover, the wars produced a large number of young war-widows and never-married women, and these women without families are now reaching the threshold of old age.

Beneath these social changes, the most fundamental change occurred in the core social institution of Japanese society, i.e., the Japanese family system. The shift from Imperial Japan to the democratic nation signifies marked discontinuity in the support system for the elderly. Focusing on the Japanese family system, this chapter discusses the impact of social change on today's elderly. First the pre-1945 Japanese family system will be discussed, then we will turn to the impact of the abolishment of the system in terms of the living arrangements of the aged.

1. The Japanese Family (ie)¹ System

Modern Japanese history began in 1868 when the Tokugawa Shogunate collapsed and was replaced by the Meiji Imperial Government. Pressed by the fear that Japan would become colonized by the Western powers (many Asian nations including China had already become their colonies in effect), the new regime had to unite the nation and establish its internal sovereignty in a short period of time. For this purpose, the patriarchal family system, or ie system, was formalized and strengthened. In fact, it is not an exaggeration to state that Imperial Rule would not have been possible without the family system -- a system in which the support of the aged parents was firmly institutionalized.

In 1871 the Imperial Government issued the order which required every Japanese to be registered in the family record, and this order provided the basis for the 1899 Meiji Civil Code which formally established the family system. The household, the official unit of family registration, was defined as the group of lineally related members sharing communal living. Each household head was legally required to report to local agencies such family events as birth, death, marriage, divorce, and adoption. Despite official abolishment of the family system in 1945, the family registration system was maintained and is currently enforced, with the result that every Japanese still has

her/her family record. The family registration record (koseki) is one's documented social identity, a copy of which must be submitted when one applies for school or a job. Even today, the household is the unit in the Japanese census, which explains why major surveys are based on a sampling of household units.

This was not a completely new policy since it had a precedent. The Tokugawa Shogunate had already developed a similar system in the seventeenth century through branch temples of the major Buddhist sects, in order to suppress Christianity, and later to keep a record for efficient tax collection. Thus, the idea of family registration was not foreign either to the Imperial Government or to its people.

The prototype of the family system was that of the ruling bushi or warrior class in the feudal Tokugawa Shogunate, which was the patriarchal, stem family system. By enforcing the family registration and by institutionalizing the patriarchal system across Japan, the Imperial Government tried to gain control over the Japanese people.

Under the ie system, the household head was granted unusually strong legal power and authority over his family members, particularly his wife and children. For instance, he could, at his discretion, expel any children from his family as a way of punishment, a sanction which not only stigmatized the children but also socially erased their family records. Only outlaws and social drop-outs had no

family records. A son younger than 30 years old and a daughter younger than 25 years old could not marry without the approval of the household head. Because it was a patriarchal system, a wife had a very vulnerable status; since it was essential to have a male successor, barren wives were apt to be sent back to their native families and the divorce rate in the pre-1945 era was quite high.

However, it appears that the household head rarely exercised these prerogatives and only did so under extreme circumstances because he was, at the same time, held liable for the well-being of his family members. Public disclosure of one's family problems was the last thing the head of a household wanted, and when it occurred, it was not so much out of his own wish as due to mounting normative pressure to enforce sanctions. Thus it is important to note here that the family system was not only a political unit but also a welfare unit.

Ideologically, Imperial Japan was a family state in which the Imperial Family was regarded as the model for other institutions. The authoritarian relationship between the household head and his family members was parallel to the absolute relationship between the Emperor and his people. The nation was conceptualized as an organized mass of families with the Emperor as the ultimate head of all families. Indeed the Japanese word for nation, kokka, is made up of two words, nation and family, and it was taught literally that all Japanese were just like the Emperor's

children (sekishi).

Throughout the pre-1945 period, the Imperial Government launched a massive moral campaign to consolidate the family system. For this purpose Confucian teachings were emphasized because Confucianism was the ideological backbone of the warrior class family system in the Tokugawa era. Two key Confucian concepts, kō and chū were singled out and repeatedly taught in moral indoctrination mainly through compulsory school education and military training. Kō means filial duty, and chū is complete devotion to the Emperor. Needless to say, this set of beliefs was the ideological side of the institutional relationship between the family system and the Imperial Rule.

Kō prescribed four distinct duties for children (Kawashima, 1957): the duty to respect and feel piety towards one's parents; the duty to promote the fame of one's family by becoming socially successful; the duty to devote oneself to support of one's parents in their old age; and the duty to perform ancestral worship. For ordinary people, to practice kō was--and is even today--known as oya-kōkō, meaning the third duty, i.e., devoted support of the aged parents. Therefore, the best aid to the reputation of old parents was that they had a dutiful son (kōkō-musuko). Similarly, the best praise that adult children could receive was to be told that they were oya-kōkō, and the worst social sanction for them is labeled oya-fukō, lacking filial duty. These expressions are commonly used even today though to a

lesser extent.

When kō was translated into one's relationship with the Emperor, it became chū, unconditional devotion to him. For instance, this concept was a fundamental principle in the Imperial Army in which all orders were thought to be given or approved by the Emperor himself so that the orders had to be accepted in absolute terms.

The legitimacy of the family (ie) system was supported not only by moral indoctrination in the Confucian teachings, but also by the Civil Code and the Criminal Code. The toughest penalties--either death penalty or life imprisonment without exception--applied to paricide.

What is more important for our discussion, however, is the rights and duties regarding support of the aged parents in the Civil Code. Let us compare the old Meiji Civil Code and the current democratic Civil Code with regard to the relevant articles concerning the support of old parents.

The Meiji Civil Code (instituted in 1899)²

Article 954: Lineal kin and brothers and sisters have a duty to support one another. It is the same for lineal ascendants of the household head and those of his wife who were in the same household.

Article 956: When there is more than one person who has the duty to provide support, it is divided according to their respective capacities. However, the one in the same household should provide support first.

Article 957: When there is more than one person who needs to be supported and when all of them cannot be supported, the support should be given in the

following order:

1. lineal ascendants
2. lineal descendants
3. spouse
4. lineal ascendants of the spouse,
who are in the same household
5. brothers and sisters
6. others

Evidently, Article 954 defined the extent of family support, Article 956, the duty to provide support, and Article 957, the right to receive support. The ideology of the patriarchal family system is clearly stated in these Articles. The priorities were given parents of the household head before his wife and children, his children before his wife, and his parents-in-law in his household (which was a very exceptional case) before his own brothers and sisters.

In the ie system, the eldest son ideally succeeded his father and eventually became the household head, and his younger brothers were to establish "branch" families whereas his sisters married into other households. If one had only daughters, one of them, usually the eldest daughter, remained at her natal household and when she got married, her husband became a muko-yōshi, an adopted son who married the daughter and eventually became the household head in her family registration. If a couple had no child, then it was generally practiced that they adopted a young boy from among their kin and raised him as the eldest son. In these ways, the family line was successively maintained, and so was the support mechanism of aged parents.

It should be emphasized that the duty of the eldest son in supporting aged parents was reciprocated by the fact that he was the recipient of most inheritance; younger brothers got a smaller portion of it, and sisters got even less than brothers.

Interestingly, Yuzawa (1970) points out that despite these legal prescriptions, there were very few lawsuits regarding filial support in the pre-1945 period, and he attributed this to effective moral indoctrination by the Imperial Government. This in turn suggests the prevalence and solidity of the family system.

Japan's defeat in World War II marked the most drastic discontinuity in its modern history. The post-War reconstruction started with the destruction of Imperial Japan. The old Constitution which had given the Emperor the absolute power was rewritten and so was the old Civil Code. Democracy became a magic word all of a sudden and the movement for democracy brought traditional thoughts and customs under vehement attack. Consequently, because of its crucial role in Imperial Japan, the family system was labeled as a feudalistic institution and became a major target of a new moral campaign. Under such social circumstances, the present Civil Code was written; the following two articles are the most relevant to support of aged parents:

The Present Civil Code (instituted in 1948)

Article 877: Lineal kin and brothers and sisters have a duty to support one another.

Article 878: When there is more than one person who has the duty to provide support, its order should be determined by mutual consultation. When this is not possible, the Family Court makes the decision. Likewise, when there is more than one person who needs to be supported and when all of them cannot be supported, the order to receive support should be determined by mutual consultation. When this is not possible, the Family Court makes the decision.

Undoubtedly, these articles seem very democratic. The family (ie) system was officially abolished when this Civil Code took effect. However, looking at the new Civil Code from the standpoint of family support for the aged, the Code is very ambiguous; in fact it does not prescribe anything in this respect. What it states is essentially that it is now up to free negotiations among children to decide who, if anyone, should support aged parents, and to what extent. In other words, the change was from strict normative and legal prescriptions to normative and legal ambiguities.

Furthermore, democracy permeated the heirship; a widow can now receive half of her husband's inheritance, while the other half should be equally divided by his children. Even though the pre-war family system was undemocratic, it functioned to support aged parents, because the duty of filial support by the eldest son was reciprocated by his almost exclusive right for inheritance. The basic structure of this reciprocity has been lost in post-war Japan.

At this point, I should discuss the relationship between the ie system and indigenous family practices among

the Japanese. For the fact that the imperial Government had to engage in a massive nation-wide moral campaign, and that it had to legally formalize the ie system, indicate that there existed a gap between custom and law. As I pointed out earlier, the prototype of the ie system was the patriarchal family system of the warrior class in feudal Japan, the ruling class which only represented a tiny portion of the Japanese population in those days as the vast majority were peasants. The most significant difference between this law and pre-existing custom was this: due to suppression by the ruling class, the peasant class could not afford to and was not allowed to develop the formal family system as the warrior-class did. The household heads of the peasants did not have strong authoritative power over their family members. Peasant families in feudal times were pretty much like families in other pre-modern societies. The gap was also evident even after the formalization of the ie system, because the living situation of the majority of the Japanese was not improved to a significant degree by the change of governments. This was evidently the main reason why the Imperial Government had to launch the indoctrination of Confucian ethics and to establish a legal code to consolidate the ie system in all social classes.

On the other hand, there were, of course, great similarities between the ie system and the indigenous family practice. It is true that for centuries the Japanese have placed strong value on caring for aged parents, not so much

because of the influence of Confucianism, but because of ancestor worship, the core of the Japanese religious life throughout their history (Smith, 1974; Kinoshita, 1982). In fact, ancestor worship is so fundamental to Japanese life that it may have been the chief determinant of the treatment that the aged received. The existence of aged parents itself was a symbol of the continuity of one's family line. Since the emphasis on support of one's parents in old age and ancestor worship were incorporated in the ie ideology, it may be said that there was a readiness among the Japanese to absorb ideologically the patriarchal family system.

Looking at the ie system from the perspective of the relationship between modernization and the institutional status of the aged, the Japanese case presents an unique exception to world trends. It has been demonstrated that the social status of the aged weakened or disintegrated as other societies underwent the process of modernization (Cowgill and Holmes, 1972; Achenbaum and Stearns, 1978). The period of Imperial Japan, 1868-1945, was the period during which Japan changed from a feudal society to a modern industrial one. In this period of modernization, the ie system actually promoted the institutional status of the aged, compared with that in the pre-modern era (for further discussion on this issue, see Kinoshita, 1982).

To conclude our historical summary, today's aged spent their formative and early adult years under Imperial Rule;

they were subject to the massive moral indoctrination of filial duty and many of them actually lived up to it by performing the prescribed responsibilities. And yet, when they themselves reached old age, the social mechanism of reciprocity for support in old age was lost and they had to face uncertainty with regard to which child they could depend on, or whether or not they could count on their children at all. In this sense, the lives of the present generation of Japanese elderly have been caught in the midst of the social change of modern Japanese history.

2. Changing Living Arrangements of the Elderly

Given the equivalence of co-residence and caring for aged parents under the ie system, clearly the key to understanding the impact of its abolishment is to ask; with whom are the aged living today? Or to be more specific, are they living with families of their adult children, particularly with the eldest son's family as tradition would demand?

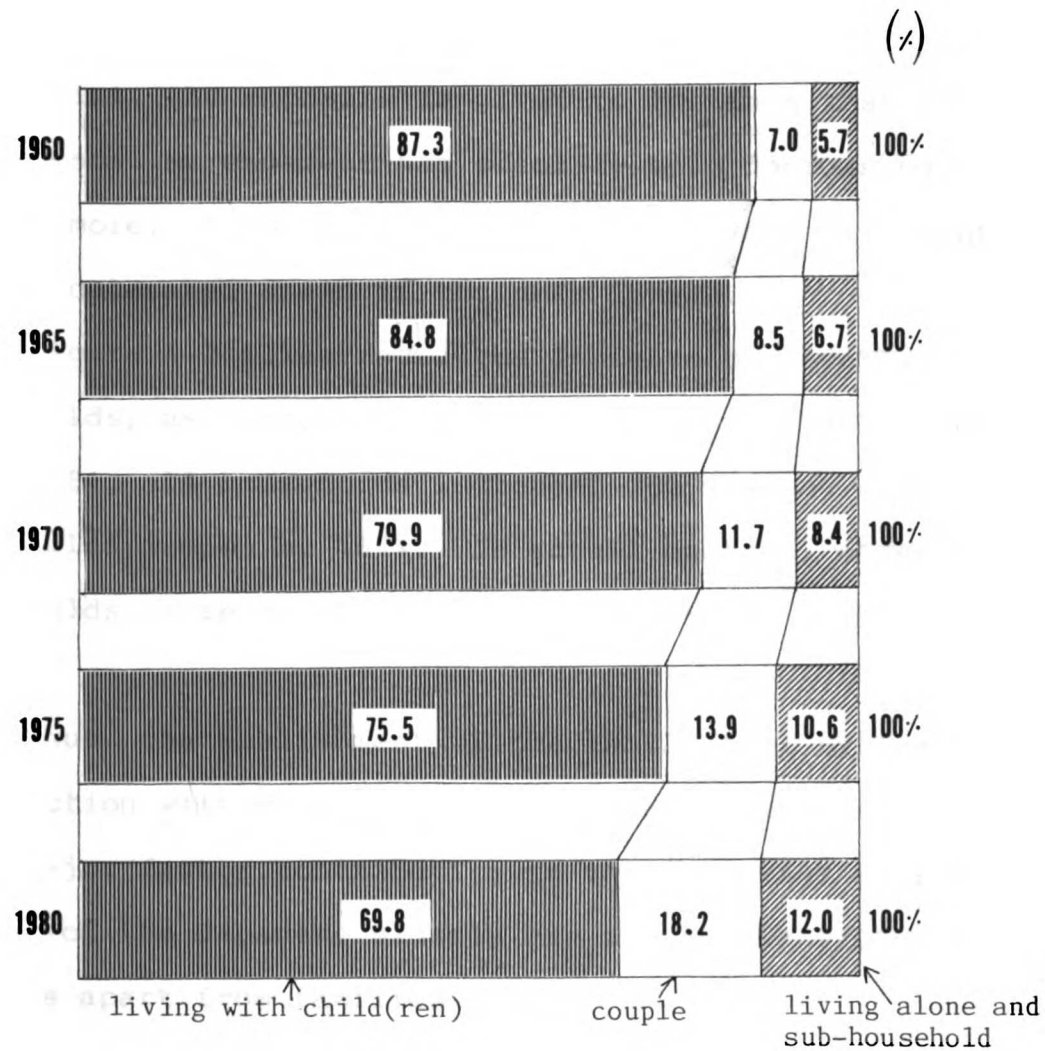
One theoretical approach to the impact of the abolishment of the family (ie) system in post-war Japan is to focus on the "lag" phenomenon. For despite the change in the formal social institutions, the old system and its ideology remain for some time as a realistic and important, if not the only, frame of reference for many people. This may be even more evident if, as in post-war Japan, new norms

are not available. Focusing on the changing trends in the living arrangements of the elderly, this section will discuss the impact of the abolishment of the family (ie) system.

In the pre-1945 period, the Japanese aged had scarcely any choice but to live with their own (natural or adopted) son's family.³ Interestingly, though, the first national census in 1920 reported a high proportion of nuclear households (a couple with children; a couple without child; or own parent with unmarried children), accounting for 54.3% of all households (Yuzawa, 1970). Two reasons may be offered to explain this result. First, life expectancy was very low and the number of the aged was quite small in those days, which shortened the duration of the three-generation phase of household composition. Second, the ie system functioned in such a way that only the eldest son remained in the parents' household--sisters married out and brothers who established branch nuclear families were more numerous than oldest sons.

Rates of three types of living arrangements of the elderly (65 or older) are shown for the period 1960-1980 in Figure 4-1. The term "sub-household" in the chart means those elderly who are in institutions or who are living with relatives other than children. In 1960, 87.3% of those over 65 years old lived with children, 7.0% only with spouse, and 5.7% either alone or in sub-household. The traditional living arrangement decreased from 87.3% in 1960 to 69.8% in

Figure 4-1: Living Arrangements of Those Over 65 Years Old in Terms of Household Units



Source: National Census, Prime Minister's Office
(Soda and Miura, 1982, p. 73).

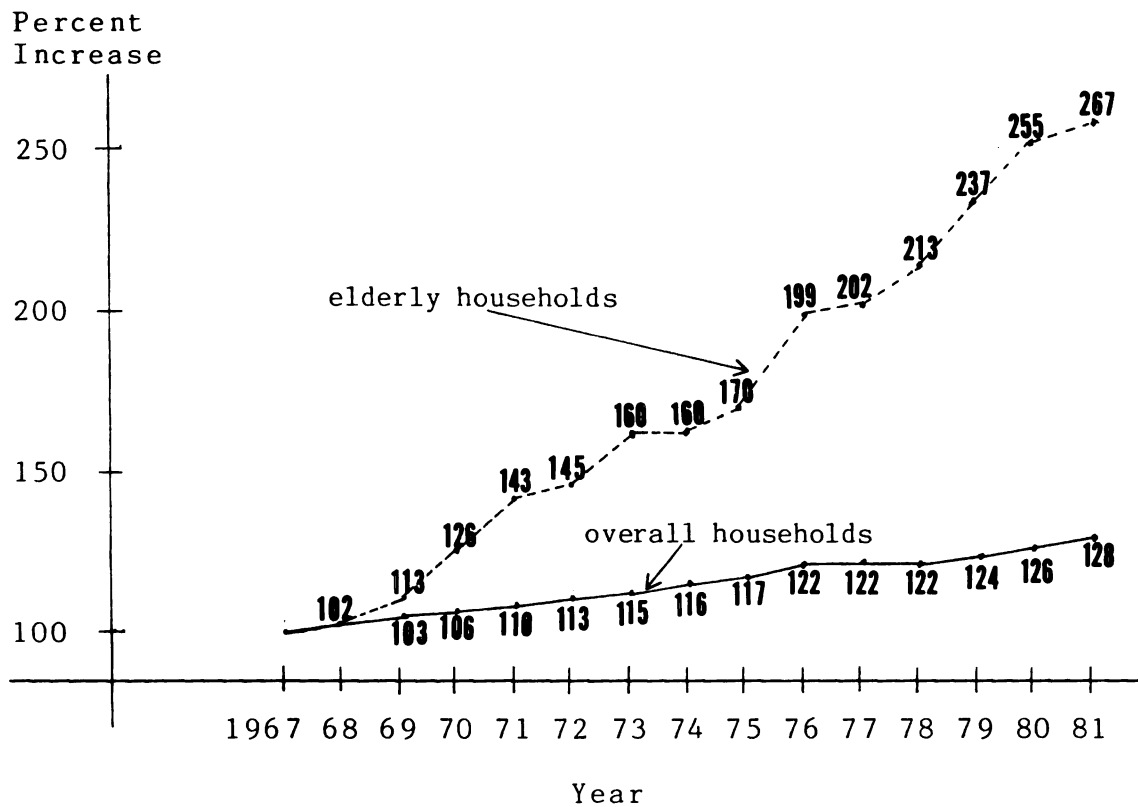
1980. In contrast, elderly couple households increased from 7.0% in 1960 to 18.2% in 1980. The rate of living alone or in a sub-household increased from 5.7% to 12.0%. From the standpoint of Westerners, it may be noteworthy that even in 1980, as much as 70% of the Japanese elderly were still living with children. However, from the Japanese standpoint, the emphasis is given to the fact that the traditional arrangement has steadily been decreasing. Furthermore, it is expected that these trends will continue with accelerated speed in the near future.

Figure 4-2 illustrates the increase of elderly households, as a proportion of the number in 1967. Between 1967-1981, all households increased 28% whereas elderly households jumped by 167%. In actual numbers, elderly households increased from 950,000 in 1967 to 1,540,000 in 1981.

Thus, the abolishment of the family (ie) system, in conjunction with growing financial independence of the aged, is a major factor contributing to the fact that a growing number of the Japanese elderly are now living alone or as couples apart from families.

What, then, is the impact upon people's thinking about desirable living arrangements of the aged? Since 1973, the Prime Minister's Office has been conducting annual nationwide surveys on aging, and the 1974 survey was specifically focused on support of aged parents. The results of this survey are worth presenting in detail for the following

Figure 4-2: Percentile Increase of Elderly and All Households, 1967-1981 (1967=100)



Source: Ministry of Health and Welfare, 1981
(Soda and Miura, 1982, p. 67).

three reasons. First, this is the most thorough survey on filial support that is available today. Second, it has two appropriate samples; married men and women in their thirties and forties who may be in a position to support their aged parents, and men and women who are between 60 and 74 years old. Third, the results of this survey have been replicated by other smaller scale surveys.

Here I would like to introduce two Japanese words, which may facilitate our understanding of the living arrangements of the elderly. Both words are so commonly used by the Japanese that familiarity with them is important. One is dōkyo, which literally means co-living, but when this word is used by the Japanese, it essentially means co-residence between aged parents and a family of their child, which generally means the three generation household. That is, dōkyo is the word used to describe the traditional living arrangement of the aged. The other word is bekkyo, literally separate living. This word denotes the non-traditional living arrangement of the aged. Thus, in terms of actual living arrangements, dōkyo and bekkyo are the two possibilities.

Table 4-1 presents how adult children as a group were thinking regarding the desirability of living with their parents after they marry. Since it is fairly common in Japan that unmarried children remain at the parents' house until their marriage, and that dōkyo after marriage generally means the child's commitment to the traditional

Table 4-1: Adult Children's Views of Desirable Living Arrangements for Parents after Marriage by Residential Area and Education

	number of subjects	desirable living arrangements					total (%)
		dōkyo	modified dōkyo	conditional bekkyo	bekkyo	others unknown	
Total	4,895	49	25	17	7	2	100
<u>areas of residence</u>							
metropolitan	1,206	33	27	24	11	5	100
cities (>150,000)	1,118	45	28	18	6	3	100
cities (<150,000)	1,195	53	26	14	5	2	100
rural	1,376	62	20	10	5	2	100
<u>Education received</u>							
high (14-16 yrs)	657	35	29	24	8	4	100
middle (12 yrs)	2,058	45	27	19	7	2	100
low (9 years)	2,119	57	23	12	6	2	100

Dōkyo - to live together as much as possible.

Modified dōkyo - to live separately while parents are independent, but to live together when they become dependent.

Conditional bekkyo - to live separately if high contact is possible.

Bekkyo - to live separately as much as possible.

Source: Prime Minister's Office

(Zenkoku Shakai Fukushi Kyōgikai, 1982, p. 26)

support pattern, the "after children marry" clause was added to the question. The Table shows the respondents' opinions in terms of their area of residence as well as of their education.

First, looking at the overall results, 49% of the adult children thought it desirable for the children to live together with their aged parents as much as possible. I call this type the dōkyo type. Twenty-five percent of them preferred separate living while their parents are healthy but living together when the parents become frail and dependent. I call this the modified dōkyo type. Seventeen percent thought that they should live separately if they can maintain high interaction; this may be called the conditional bekkyo type. Lastly, 7% thought it desirable to live separately as much as possible, i.e., the bekkyo type. Therefore, within the dōkyo and bekkyo alternatives, the survey tests four types of desirable living arrangement: the strict dōkyo type, the modified dōkyo type, the conditional bekkyo type, and the strict bekkyo type.

Regional differences of the respondents' residence are shown in four ways: metropolitan area, cities over 150,000 residents, cities under 150,000 residents, and rural area (small towns and villages). The differences are quite noticeable in that the rural residents are the most traditional (62% dōkyo type), that the metropolitan residents are the least traditional (33% dōkyo type), and that in between the residents in larger cities are less

traditional than those in smaller cities. That is, in the rural-urban continuum, the impact of factors such as the abolishment of the ie system, housing and labor patterns is clearly seen.

The same trend is discerned with educational differences. The higher the education the respondents received, the less traditional they are in their opinion about desirable living arrangements of aged parents. Since urbanization and educational trends are highly correlated, these two factors reinforce each other. This is reflected in the similar preferences for dōkyo or bekkyo among the most educated/metropolitan and among the least educated/rural children. While the rural residents are still strongly oriented toward the traditional dōkyo type, the metropolitan residents now have three main alternatives (the dōkyo type, the modified dōkyo type, and the conditional bekkyo type).

Now for the elderly group, men and women 60-74 years old. Of the total 7,863 subjects, 95% had at least one child and 5% were childless. Of the 7,471 elderly parents who had at least one adult child, 75% were living with their children at the time of the survey, i.e., dōkyo, and 25% were bekkyo. Further, of all dōkyo elderly, 63% were living with a son's family, 26% with unmarried children, and 11% with a daughter's family.

Table 4-2 presents opinions that elderly respondents held about desirable living arrangements. As in Table 4-1,

Table 4-2: Old People's Views of Desirable Living Arrangements with Married Children by Age, Health, and Actual Living Arrangements.

	number of subjects	desirable living arrangements					total (%)
		dōkyo	modified dōkyo	conditional bekkyo	bekkyo	others unknown	
Total	7,863	59	17	8	14	2	100
<u>Age</u>							
60-64	2,969	56	19	8	15	2	100
65-69	2,723	60	17	8	13	2	100
70-74	2,171	65	15	5	13	2	100
<u>Health status</u>							
healthy	4,666	59	18	8	13	2	100
not so healthy	2,753	58	17	8	15	2	100
on & off in bed	363	66	12	4	15	3	100
in bed for over 6 months	73	76	13	-	6	5	100
<u>Actual living</u>							
Dōkyo (75%)	5,584	72	10	5	11	2	100
Bekkyo (25%)	1,887	25	36	13	24	2	100

Dōkyo - to live together as much as possible.

Modified dōkyo - to live separately while parents are independent, but to live together when they become dependent.

Conditional bekkyo - to live separately if high contact is possible.

Bekkyo - to live separately as much as possible or cannot be helped to live separately.

Source: Prime Minister's Office
(Zenkoku Shakai Fukushi Kyōgikai, 1982, p. 36)

the answers were pre-coded, but the bekkyo type is composed of an active type ("should live separately as much as possible") and a passive type ("cannot be helped to live separately"). Overall, 59% selected the dōkyo type as the most desirable living arrangement, 17% the modified dōkyo type, 8% the conditional bekkyo type, and 14% the bekkyo type (5% active bekkyo and 9% passive bekkyo).

In terms of age differences--60-64, 65-69, 70-74--the older the respondents were, the stronger their dōkyo orientation became, although differences were small. Similarly, there are not wide age differences in the other three types of arrangement. Next, regarding the health status of the respondents, which were divided into four categories (healthy, not so healthy, bed ridden on and off, and bedridden for more than six months), it is evident that the more dependent the health status was, the stronger the dōkyo orientation became. For instance, those aged who have been in bed for over six months predominantly preferred the dōkyo type (76%). In addition, in terms of their actual living arrangements, dōkyo versus bekkyo, 72% of the dōkyo respondents chose the dōkyo type whereas the opinions varied more among the bekkyo respondents; 25% dōkyo, 36% modified dōkyo, 13% conditional bekkyo, and 24% bekkyo (of which 16% was passive and 8% active).

Both Table 4-1 and 4-2 may be subject to various interpretations. I would like to emphasize the fact that in comparison with the pre-1945 period in which dōkyo was not

only normatively prescribed but in reality it was practically the only arrangement for the aged, there are now four major types of living arrangement possible for the elderly.

Particular emphasis should be given to two new intermediate types, the modified dōkyo type and the conditional bekkyo type, both of which are concrete outcomes of the abolishment of the old family system. Despite this fact, because of the inadequate long-term care system in Japan, it is still adult children that the elderly must count on when they become frail.

Chapter 5. Welfare Homes for the Aged and Emerging Retirement Communities

This chapter has two sections. The first section discusses welfare homes for the aged in Japan--their general characteristics and problems. As will be shown, the inadequacy of long-term care facilities is the main reason for the emergence of retirement communities. The second section considers retirement communities in Japan; general problems in this industry will be critically discussed. My purpose in this chapter is to explicate why and how retirement communities are now emerging in Japan.

1. Welfare Homes for the Aged in Japan

Under the current Japanese welfare system, homes for the aged are all public and non-proprietary, and all homes are welfare facilities and not medical facilities. This section is concerned with their brief history, recent growth, operating principles, and some serious problems they are facing today.

History¹

Modern welfare facilities for the aged in Japan started in the 1890s as sporadic philanthropic activities among Buddhist and Christian groups to save the destitute and familyless elderly. Such houses were called Yōrōin,

literally support-houses for the aged. The Imperial Government was most reluctant to develop any welfare services for its people, particularly for the aged, not merely because the notion of public welfare was foreign to it, or because it feared the costs of such programs, but more importantly, because of the ideological threat that such services would bring against its legitimacy. As discussed in the previous chapter, the family (ie) system was the most important institution supporting Imperial Rule, and it was a system under which welfare could in no sense become a public issue. The well-being of family members was a private problem for which each household head was legally held liable. The family was a welfare unit in those days. Therefore, the destitute and familyless aged were the visible social failures of a patriarchal family system, who could not live up to the minimum expectations of the Government, i.e., that they would form their own families. Public support for them was in direct contradiction to the ruling ideology. Furthermore, the degree to which the aged were being taken care of by their families was a significant social yardstick to judge the pervasiveness of family (ie) ideology, and consequently the soundness of Imperial Rule.

Understandably, an extremely strong stigma was attached to the residents of Yōrōin. Stigmatizing was even actively encouraged in the indoctrination of filial duty.

Information on the number of Yōrōin is very scarce. In 1913 (the last year of the Meiji era), there were only 23

Yōrōin throughout Japan, whose size ranged from "several" to 30 residents. Between 1913 and 1926 (the Taisho era), 32 Yōrōin were reported to be in existence (Ogasawara, 1982, p. 26). It was in 1932, following the impact of the Great Depression, that the Government enacted the first law to provide public support for the destitute, but the law was very limited both in its scope and its application.

One hundred and thirty Yōrōin in 1941 was believed to be the largest number prior to the end of World War II. As the war escalated, it became increasingly difficult to maintain the operation of Yōrōin, and when the war ended in 1945, there were only 75 of them still in operation.

Under the new democratic Constitution, a new law was passed in 1950, which articulated, for the first time in Japanese history, the citizen's right to live, and the government's responsibility to provide necessary support. With this law, Yōrōin were re-classified as public welfare facilities. In 1950 the number was 170, and it increased to 460 in 1955 and 607 in 1960 across Japan (Ogasawara, 1982, p. 34).

In June 1963, the Welfare Act for the Aged (Rōjin Fukushi Hō), a landmark law in the history of social welfare for the Japanese elderly, was enacted, taking effect at the end of that year. The significance of this Act may be equivalent to that of the Older Americans Act in the United States. The Act has served as the basic framework to welfare services for the elderly, and has shaped the current

system of homes for the aged. The previous Yōrōin were incorporated into the new system, and the much stigmatized name was officially abolished. A new name, Rōjin Hōmu, or home for the aged, came into official use. The change of names, however, did not eradicate the stigma for the residents, and it continues even today.

Three Types of Homes for the Aged

The Welfare Act for the Aged in 1963 established three types of homes for the aged, as well as community-based senior centers. While Yōrōin were only for the destitute elderly who did not have supporting family members, the new system was based not only on the economic needs of the aged but also on the need for physical care of the dependent aged. This was a remarkable departure from traditional welfare services in Japan, which were essentially designed for low-income people.

Three types of homes for the aged should be briefly explained. Yōgo Rōjin Hōmu, or Yōgo home for the aged, is defined as a welfare facility which provides intermediate care for those over 65 years old who cannot receive necessary care at their own residence due to physical, mental, or environmental reasons as well as financial reasons. The old Yōrōin were all re-classified as Yōgo homes. This is an important point to bear in mind because Yōrōin were essentially residential facilities and not designed for the provision of intermediate care. As a

consequence, Yōgo homes began having dual functions as residential facilities and intermediate care facilities, and these functions often conflicted. This problem will be discussed later in this section.

Tokubetsu Yōgo Rōjin Hōmu, commonly shortened to Toku-Yō home, are special Yōgo homes for the aged, which are defined as nursing care facilities for those over 65 years old, who require constant care due to marked physical and/or mental impairments, and who at the same time cannot receive necessary care at their own residence. It is of utmost importance to note that financial necessity is not a required condition to be eligible for admission to Toku-Yō homes. Officially they are open to middle class families with highly dependent elderly, although priority tends to be given to low-income applications if other conditions are equal.

The third type is Keihi Rōjin Hōmu, small-fee homes for the aged, which are boarding facilities, providing those over 60 years old who pay a small fee with various services for daily living. Keihi homes are divided into two subtypes; Type A and Type B. The former offers accommodations for those over 60 years old who do not have their own family, or who cannot live with their own family due to unavoidable circumstances, and at the same time whose monthly income is less than 1.5 times the average monthly operating cost per resident. Type B Keihi homes are for those over 60 years old who cannot live with their own

family due to housing problems or family reasons, and who are capable of independent living, including cooking.

In short, there are two distinct differences in the three types of homes for the aged. Financial necessity is required to be admitted to Yōgo and Keihi homes, but not to Toku-Yō homes. In terms of physical and/or mental disabilities, applicants for Toku-Yō homes should have marked disabilities, those for Yōgo homes relatively minor disabilities, and those for Keihi homes none at all. Thus, both Yōgo and Keihi homes are designed primarily for lower-income elderly, whereas Toku-Yō homes are designed to be available for severely dependent elderly regardless of their financial situation. Toku-Yō homes are in fact the only long-term care facilities for the aged in Japan. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the underlying philosophy of the Welfare Act for the Aged is still that family care is the most desirable arrangement for the aged and that welfare homes for the aged are only for those aged who for some reason or other cannot receive necessary care from their family members.

For Yōgo and Toku-Yō homes, 80% of the total operating cost is covered by the national government and 20% by the prefectural and local government. Fiscal support goes directly to the homes rather than to the individual residents, and it is not a cost-reimbursement system. Each home operates within the set budget determined by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. In the 1983 fiscal year,

the monthly operating cost per resident in a 50-bed Toku-Yō home in Tokyo--where the cost was higher than the national average--is about \$780. Similarly, that of a Yōgo home in Tokyo was about \$479 (Kōsei Tōkei Kyōkai, 1983, p. 167).

Although the residents of Yōgo and Toku-Yō homes had not been required to make any payments prior to 1980, a partial individual payment system was introduced in that year for the first time. The amount was to be determined according to the annual income of the residents. In the 1983 fiscal year, the maximum monthly individual payment was \$192 for a Toku-Yō resident and \$171 for a Yōgo resident.

The residents at Keihi homes are in principle required to pay all necessary costs. However, while they have to pay for their own living expenses, there is governmental support for administrative costs since the home is designated as a welfare facility by the 1963 Act.

Admission to a Yōgo or Toku-Yō home is arranged through the local office of the Social Welfare Agency--an office which all municipalities are required to set up by the Act. The officials at this office make crucial decisions as to whether or not the applicant should be admitted, and if so, to which type of home he/she should be assigned. The applicants or their families cannot choose the type of home or its location. Physicians have no official role in the process of admission or assignment. In this sense, the admission to a Yōgo or Toku-Yō home amounts to institutionalization. Admission to a Keihi home is

different; it is based on a direct contract between the director of the home and the applicant.²

Recent Growth of Toku-Yō Homes

The recent growth of both Toku-Yō homes and the resident population is shown in Table 5-1, in comparison with Yōgo and Keihi homes. First, compare the increase in the number of homes in the three types. The increase of Toku-Yō homes is dramatic, rising from only one home in 1963, the year when the Welfare Act for the Aged took effect, to 1,311 homes in 1982. Between 1971 and 1982 approximately one hundred new Toku-Yō homes were built and put into operation annually.

In sharp contrast with the growth of Toku-Yō homes, the increase of Yōgo homes was limited only in the period 1963-1975, and from 1975 the number stabilized. Six hundred and seventy-three Yōgo homes in 1963 were old Yōrōin which had been classified by the Act. Thus, Yōgo homes inherited many negative characteristics such as old buildings, large rooms with little privacy, etc. Another consequence of this was that despite the official definition of Yōgo homes as intermediate care facilities, they have also had the function of residential facilities as Yōrōin once did. As a result, it became evident that relatively healthy residents and those who require intermediate care were living together at the same Yōgo homes. Due to these problems, the Ministry of Health and Welfare decided that new Yōgo homes built

Table 5-1: Numbers of Homes for the Aged and Residents by Type, 1963-1982

Year	Toku-Yō Homes		Yōgo Homes		Keihi Homes	
	number of facilities	Resident population	number of facilities	Resident population	number of facilities	Resident population
1963	1	80	673	47,024	16	1,082
1964	13	954	685	49,435	25	1,680
1965	27	1,921	702	51,569	36	2,259
1966	42	3,142	729	53,944	44	2,859
1967	62	4,592	750	55,711	44	2,840
1968	81	5,861	769	57,582	47	2,997
1969	109	7,819	790	59,382	48	3,082
1970	152	11,280	810	60,812	52	3,305
1971	197	14,751	839	63,306	60	3,880
1972	272	20,183	870	65,503	66	4,348
1973	350	26,503	890	67,770	82	5,352
1974	451	33,955	914	69,839	101	6,275
1975	539	41,606	934	71,031	121	7,527
1976	627	48,845	936	71,502	132	8,248
1977	714	55,482	938	71,352	143	8,952
1978	799	61,515	939	71,060	164	10,036
1979	903	71,481	942	70,844	187	11,405
1980	1,031	80,385	944	70,450	206	12,544
1981	1,165	89,510	945	70,218	229	13,831
1982	1,311	98,903	946	69,963	246	14,681

since 1973 should have either single rooms or double occupancy rooms, and that after 1976 new Yōgo homes should not be built except under special circumstances. Currently, efforts are being made to remodel the old large rooms into single or double rooms at many Yōgo homes. These facts explain the lack of growth of Yōgo homes.

Although the number of Keihi homes jumped from 16 in 1963 to 246 in 1982, their role remains minor compared with Toku-Yō and Yōgo homes.

Now, look at the growth of the resident population in the three types of home. The number of residents in Toku-Yō homes rose from just 80 in 1963 to nearly 100,000 in 1982. The combined total of the residents in the three types of homes in 1982 is 183,547, which is approximately 1.6% of the total aged (65 years old and over) population.

All the homes have high occupancy rates (Soda and Miura, 1982, p. 229). Despite the dramatic increase of Toku-Yō homes, their occupancy rate is virtually 100%, the highest of all three types. As of October 1980, the occupancy rate of Toku-Yō homes was 98.9%. Occupancy rates are 94.2% for Yōgo homes, and 89.9% for Keihi homes.

The various processes by which people are institutionalized in Toku-Yō homes are not very well known. The Tokyo Metropolitan Institute of Gerontology (1981) conducted a study on this issue, with the following results: Of 49 Toku-Yō homes in Tokyo in 1980, ten homes were sampled according to size. Of 1,442 residents, 36.2% came from

general hospitals, 32.1% from Yōgo homes, and 25.3% from their own residences, these three accounting for the vast majority (93.6%) of cases. The other 6.4% came from miscellaneous sources. The socio-economic background of the residents from both general hospitals and private residences was not reported, so it is not certain how many of them were middle class. It may be obvious that when the residents at Yōgo homes became frail and needed nursing care, they were admitted to Toku-Yō homes because they had been from lower-income background and could not get necessary intermediate care from their families in the first place.

Shortage of Toku-Yō Homes

As we have just seen, the Japanese government has made rigorous efforts to build many Toku-Yō homes since 1963. Even so, it is evident from the full occupancy rates of the existing Toku-Yō homes that more homes are needed to meet the social needs of long-term nursing care for the dependent elderly. For instance, in 1980 there were an estimated 438,000 netakiri elderly in Japan (Kōsei Tōkei Kyōkai, 1983, p. 161). Netakiri, a word so commonly used by the Japanese, literally means bed-ridden. In general usage, this word applies only to the aged whose health is so deteriorated that they need extensive--usually around the clock--care. Further, this number does not include residents of Toku-Yō homes. Of these nation-wide netakiri elderly, approximately 74.0% had been in bed for more than six months at the time

of the survey.

As pointed out, Toku-Yō homes are the only long-term care facilities which provide skilled nursing care for the aged in Japan. Thus, one way to cope with the increasing demand for care of the physically and/or mentally dependent aged is to keep building more Toku-Yō homes. If this were possible, retirement communities would very likely lose their raison d'etre. Proprietary nursing homes are nonexistent in Japan. In terms of management it is far safer to build Toku-Yō homes because of the governmental support.

But, despite the growing need for more Toku-Yō homes, it is unlikely that they will continue to be built at the same speed as in the past decade. The Japanese government suffers from huge fiscal deficits and has been enforcing stringent constraints on all social programs, and those for the aged are the most drastically affected. Thus, it appears inevitable that, in order to build more Toku-Yō homes, individual payments have to be greatly increased.

This is a difficult and complex problem because it means a drastic departure from the traditional view of welfare. Welfare, for the Japanese, has meant social services for low-income people, which should be in principle free of charge. In this sense, the very existence of Toku-Yō homes is contradictory to the Japanese welfare system, since financial necessity is not an admission requirement. Still, no one can dispute the need of more long-term care facilities and everyone agrees that individual payments

should be contained at a minimum level. For instance, the introduction of partial payments by Toku-Yō residents was possible only after strong public protests and a fierce battle between the ruling Liberal Democratic Party and the opposition parties. The latter had reasons to oppose such a policy. They feared that payments by "welfare" beneficiaries, once a reality, would be extended to other social programs whose recipients are largely low-income. Put another way, the ruling party took a realistic approach and the opposition parties took a "principle" approach to this issue. Under the present Japanese political climate, it is likely that the individual payment system may be widened to include not only residents of Toku-Yō homes but also recipients of other social services.

Victims of the policy debates, families with severely dependent aged are and will continue to be left pretty much on their own. At best, they can get moral support from others in the same predicament. Many middle class families and their aged parents themselves are now able to pay for care at Toku-Yō homes even if it means that they need to pay substantially more than the current maximum individual payment. Of course, it may be a serious financial burden for them, but it may be an alternative to the onerous burden of taking care of dependent and disoriented parents at home.

Besides Toku-Yō homes, one other "realistic," though short-term, alternative for the netakiri elderly has been hospitalization as patients. Japanese medical insurance

systems are very well developed, including the medical insurance system for those over 70 years old.³ Indeed, of the 438,000 netakiri elderly in 1980, as much as 131,000 or 30% of them were hospitalized at the time of the survey. The longer hospitalization of the elderly was possible because (1) the medical insurance systems in Japan, including that for those over 70 years old, are all public, so that the individual's payment out-of-pocket is very small, and (2) the system functions in such a way that the longer the hospitalization and the more treatments are provided, the more profit medical institutions can make. As a consequence, there are a number of hospitals with many elderly inpatients, and such hospitals are called Rōjin Byōin, hospitals for the aged. Technically, Rōjin Byōin means hospitals wherein the aged exceed 60% of the total inpatients. However, Rōjin Byōin are not designed as geriatric hospitals. Rather, they are a consequence of the interaction between the shortage of Toku-Yō homes and the special medical insurance system for those over 70 years old. Since February 1983, however, this use of acute hospitals for what is in effect long-term care of the dependent aged has been discouraged by a new law, and many aged inpatients are being discharged. Their fate after discharge is a serious question because many of them were hospitalized in the beginning because they could not be cared for at home, and except for Toku-Yō homes and their own families, there is no social facility to accept them.

Thus, there is a possibility that the private sector may develop long-term care facilities like the nursing homes in the United States if residents' payments to public Toku-Yō homes are raised to such an extent that private fees can become competitive with public ones.

In conclusion: for the middle class elderly, still healthy and financially independent, or for those in middle age for that matter, there is no realistic alternative but relying on one's own children when it comes to the care they will eventually need. Toku-Yō homes are practically speaking the only alternative, but they are not a very realistic alternative for three reasons: (1) There is an absolute shortage of Toku-Yō homes. (2) Since they are welfare facilities with many characteristics of institutions, entry carries stigma both for the elderly and for their families. Toku-Yō homes are after all designed for those dependent aged who cannot receive the necessary care from their own families. (3) Admission to a Toku-Yō cannot be guaranteed when one is healthy and independent. That is, the elderly do not have control over their future fate. Even after they become frail and physically dependent, i.e., when they become eligible for Toku-Yō home admission, there may not be room for them.

To aggravate the situation for the elderly, our discussion has already demonstrated the dependence upon adult children has become increasingly problematic in recent decades. Dōkyo, the traditional living arrangement for the

support of aged parents, has been declining. There is a growing normative ambiguity regarding filial responsibilities of adult children. Moreover, the elderly themselves are becoming more independent financially as well as in their consciousness. And yet, Japanese society has not yet provided a realistic alternative to the traditional dōkyo arrangement. It is against this background that retirement communities are now emerging in Japan.

2. Emerging Retirement Communities

This section discusses three aspects of Japanese retirement communities: The confusing system by which they are classified; their general characteristics, and their major problems.

Confusing Classification System

As we just discussed, the Welfare Act for the Aged established three types of homes for the aged. They are all public in the sense that they are designated welfare facilities with fiscal support from national and local government. The Act, however, has one minor clause regarding other form, i.e., non-public, residential facilities for the aged. Such facilities are called Yūryō Rōjin Hōmu or Yūryō home for the aged. Yūryō literally means fee-chargeable; residents of these homes have to pay all necessary costs themselves, because there is no public

fiscal support.

This more or less appended clause defined Yūryō homes for the aged as "facilities which continuously house more than ten elderly and provide them with necessary services for daily living, including meals, and which are at the same time not designated as welfare facilities by the Welfare Act of the Aged." Thus, this clause was added in order to exhaust all types of residential facilities for the aged that existed when the Act took effect. Such an "all others" category becomes problematic, however, whenever it includes distinctly different types. Such is the case with the Yūryō home clause.

Early Yūryō homes were small-scale homes run by philanthropic individuals, small groups, or social welfare non-profit organizations (Shakai Fukushi Hōjin), and they were quite different from the retirement communities that are emerging now. In fact, they were more like Keihi homes, except that they provided residential accommodations for the elderly whose income, while low, made them ineligible for Keihi homes. The fees are said to have been fairly small. Thus, early Yūryō homes functioned in effect as a kind of welfare facility. Their number is estimated to have been small, perhaps 30-50 across Japan. It is believed that these Yūryō homes did not increase and that those still in operation today are fairly small in number.

The fundamental problem is that the old Yūryō homes and modern Western-style retirement communities are lumped

together and officially classified in one category--Yūryō Home for the Aged. Accordingly, retirement communities are called by this name, and have no official or accepted name of their own.

The advent of retirement communities may not have been in the minds of the architects of the 1963 Act. For it was not until the early 1970s that they began to be built. In 1974 the Ministry of Health and Welfare issued revised guidelines on Yūryō homes to the prefectural governors. In these guidelines, a Yūryō home was redefined as "a facility which provides residential accommodations for more than or approximately fifty residents, age 60 or older, and which also furnishes such services as counselling, leisure activities and health care. Meal services are not necessarily required." Although the Ministry updated the definition and recognized the growing social need for retirement communities, it did not make any attempt to differentiate retirement communities from the old style Yūryō homes. Accordingly, it did not develop new guidelines pertinent to retirement communities per se. The rationale given by the Ministry was that since Yūryō homes were not welfare facilities, their development should be undertaken by the private sector with a minimum involvement of the government.

As a result, there exist virtually no effective regulations as to the construction and management of retirement communities, nor unified standards regarding the

levels of care provided by them. Anyone can build and operate retirement communities, as long as he follows the existing regulations for general housing development, and he can set up his own standards of care. For instance, the Welfare Act for the Aged has only a perfunctory requirement that the operator of a Yūryō home should notify the governor in the prefecture in which the home is located of its name and location, the name of the director, starting date of operation and so forth, within a month of its opening. A similar report should be made within one month of the termination of its operation. The toughest regulatory measure under the present system is that the prefectural governor can make recommendations for improvements on the basis of the 1974 guideline, but he has no power to enforce them when the recommendations are ignored.

In 1980, a life-guarantee retirement community in Tokyo went into bankruptcy, the first case in this industry. The incident became a major social issue, and was highlighted in the mass media. It also triggered the formation of a study group on retirement communities within the Ministry of Health and Welfare. Under the Ministry's strong leadership, the National Association of Yūryō Homes for the Aged (Zenkoku Yūryō Rōjin Hōmu Kyōkai) was established in February 1982. Twenty-five facilities managed by thirteen organizations joined the Association at its inception. Although the majority are modern retirement communities, the membership includes old Yūryō homes, too. The Association

is expected to become the watch-dog of the industry and to take leadership in developing standards for the quality of retirement communities. However, as of September 1983 it remained a nominal organization. Its effectiveness remains to be seen.

General Characteristics of Japanese Retirement Communities

The exact number of retirement communities is difficult to ascertain. First of all, the National Association has a problem in extending its membership, and not all Yūryō homes are members. Second, there is an uncertain number of condominium-type retirement communities which have neglected to report to the prefecture governors. Soda and Miura (1982, p. 228) mention that as of October 1982, there were 90 Yūryō homes in Japan with 6,813 residents. However, these data are the combined total of both old Yūryō homes and retirement communities, and they did not differentiate the two. Among these 90 homes the occupancy rate was reported to be relatively low, somewhere around 75%, and their size ranged from ten residents to as many as 400. Types of management included private individuals, private corporations such as life insurance companies, non-profit organizations, and social welfare non-profit organizations.

My own research identified thirty-one major retirement communities as of September 1983. These are the major ones and do not include those in the planning stage nor those residential facilities which are only for short stay, not

permanent residence. There may be some cases I failed to identify, but I am convinced that these thirty-one cases represent the vast majority of retirement communities. Accordingly, the following discussion is based on my research.

Incidentally, there are no large scale retirement villages of the Sun City type in Japan, although some large real estate corporations have plans for their development in the future.

The 31 retirement communities are categorized into three groups in terms of their operating system; 17 are life-care retirement communities, 4 are life-guarantee retirement communities, and 10 are condominium-type residences. Life-care retirement communities provide skilled nursing care as well as living accommodations specifically designed for the need of the elderly. The residents pay both an entrance fee and a monthly fee. Life-guarantee communities are similar to life-care communities with regard to the types of service rendered, but the residents pay only a set amount when they sign the entrance contract, and are not required to pay a monthly fee. Condominium-type residential facilities provide living accommodations but not skilled or intermediate nursing care; they are simply regular condominiums with minimum health care services.

Of the 17 life-care retirement communities, four are operated by one non-profit organization, and three by one

social welfare non-profit organization. Each of the remaining ten communities is operated by a separate organization: two by social welfare non-profit organizations, four by non-profit organizations, and four by private corporations. Therefore, the majority of life-care retirement communities are under the operation of non-profit, as opposed to profit-making, organizations.

All seventeen communities have been built since 1975. Since it is difficult to know the number of residents (as either one or two persons can live in a given unit) I will only discuss the number of residential units. The largest community has 386 units and the smallest has 23 units. Of the remainder, seven are in the 100-199 unit range, and five in the 200-299 unit range.

The terms of the entrance contract, the amounts of the entrance fee and monthly fee, and the type and extent of services vary greatly from one community to another. The lack of an unified standard on these issues has caused serious trouble between the residents and the management in some life-care retirement communities. This point will be further discussed shortly. The admission requirements in most communities in this category are that the applicants should be over 60 years old, and that they should be healthy enough to live independently. A physician's examination usually is not asked.

All four of the life-guarantee communities are under the operation of private corporations. One community opened

in 1960, the rest in the 1970s. The life-guarantee system is very vulnerable to inflation and other contingencies in expenditures because the system does not have the flexible financing of the residents' monthly fee. In the case of the oldest life-guarantee community, for example, the management could not survive inflation in the Oil Shock of the 1970s. It stopped accepting new residents in 1973, and it is said that it now operates, on the average, with a \$13,333 deficit per resident annually. Since it is owned by a large life insurance company, it has avoided bankruptcy. The Ministry of Health and Welfare now discourages this system of operation, and no retirement communities begun after 1975 have adopted the life-guarantee system.

All ten condominium-type communities are under the operation of private corporations.⁴ The oldest of these opened in 1971, but most of them opened in the late 1970s. Their size ranges from 132 to 294 units, with an average of 184 units. The age requirement for admission is either 45 or 55 years. Health care services are almost non-existent; at best a nurse stays on duty. Accordingly, the residents have to move out when they can no longer live independently.

In summary, four characteristics of retirement communities in Japan may be pointed out: (1) The total number is still very small. (2) There are three types: life-care, life-guarantee, and condominium. (3) Life-care communities are mostly run by non-profit organizations, whereas life-guarantee communities and condominiums are

operated by private corporations. In addition, there is a strong tendency toward chain operations by a handful of organizations or corporations. (4) There are no standardized guidelines or criteria concerning building structures, the terms of contracts, types of management or operating systems, or types of services.

Major Problems in Japanese Retirement Communities

Retirement communities in Japan have five major problems today: the vulnerability of life-guarantee communities to inflation, lack of standards, inadequate preparation for skilled nursing care, low occupancy rates, and a negative social image. As already pointed out, the life-guarantee type is vulnerable to inflation. The bankrupt community mentioned earlier had adopted this system, and so does the community which is now operating with deficits. How the existing four communities of this type will survive is difficult to foresee.

The lack of standards in all three types of retirement community is the most serious problem. For if the advertising of retirement communities in the United States emphasizes an active way of life, it is health care services or skilled nursing care that is the focus of advertising by Japanese retirement communities. Even condominium type communities make health care services as their sales point. However, the condominium type is not as problematic as the others, because residents and applicants are well aware that

they get only the minimum health care. On the other hand, the lack of standards is serious for the life-care and life-guarantee systems precisely because residents expect long-term skilled nursing care. Usually the entrance contract does not make it clear how much health care and nursing services are covered by the entrance fee and how much the residents will have to pay out of pocket when they become ill. Furthermore, the type and extent of care varies from one community to another, making it extremely difficult for the potential residents to know in advance how much money they must have. Thus, the immediate task of the National Association of Yūryō Homes is to provide accurate information on these issues. In the long run, the Association plans to develop standards for retirement communities as a whole. It is worth noting here that in terms of clarity and effectiveness of operating principles, and the level of health care and skilled nursing services, Fuji-no-sato is one of the best.

The significance of this problem must be emphasized, because long-term skilled nursing care is what is most expected of retirement communities in Japan. The only available research to date on demand for retirement communities is a 1982 survey of 712 retired business executives and public school teachers in Tokyo (Nihon Shakai Jigyō Daigaku, 1982). They indicated the following criteria in selecting a retirement community: 73.3% mentioned medical and health care services; 54.2% reliable and safe

management; 33.8% comfortable living accommodations; and 28.4% good interpersonal relationships among the residents.

The third problem, which is of course closely related to the second problem, is inadequate planning for future needs for skilled nursing care. For instance, even among life-care retirement communities, the medical and long-term care facilities are very insufficient. Some have just a few staff nurses without proper facilities and even when communities have their own clinics, the size varies between three beds and eighteen beds (the latter at Fuji-no-sato). Japanese retirement communities are so new that they have not reached the stage where large numbers of residents require extensive care. In addition, there are no reliable statistics to predict the future demand for skilled nursing care. Also important to note is the cost consideration; the better health care and nursing services are, the higher entrance fees will become, which in turn limits the accessibility of retirement communities. Considering these factors, one cannot help wondering whether many retirement communities will be unable to handle the surge of dependent residents in the near future. Every retirement community started with healthy residents, but it is undeniable that they will become dependent and eventually die in ten to fifteen years. However, what this means does not seem to be well understood by the builders of communities. In this regard, Fuji-no-sato leads the industry; it is now building a 30-bed long-term care facility of its own in addition to

the existing 18-bed clinic. This facility will become the first non-public long-term care facility in Japan.

The fourth problem is low occupancy rates. Although it is difficult to know the exact rate of occupancy among retirement communities, it is estimated to be about 75%. It is crucial for communities to acquire full or near full occupancy in the early stages of operation; otherwise, serious fiscal problems soon arise. For instance, the life-guarantee community which went into bankruptcy one year after its opening had only 32% occupancy. In this regard, Fuji-no-sato is exceptional because it is one of the rare facilities which has waiting applicants.

The fifth problem is a negative social image. I discussed earlier that retirement communities are ordinarily called Yūryō homes for the aged, and that the early Yuryo homes were in effect welfare facilities for lower income elderly. The word Rōjin Hōmu ("home for the aged"), the generic name for Yūryō, Toku-Yō, Yōgo, and Keihi homes, has a negative social meaning for the Japanese. A home for the aged is a place where unfortunate elderly who cannot receive family support have to spend their last years. Therefore, when retirement communities are called Yūryō homes for the aged, the majority of the Japanese who are unfamiliar with the actual settings are likely to think of retirement communities in a negative way. A new social entity should have a new name and image.

However, despite this problem, there is an indication

that retirement communities are getting known gradually as a possible new alternative for old age. The social demand survey cited earlier reports that among retired business executives and teachers, as much as 97.1% were aware of the existence of retirement communities, whereas 61.5% were aware of Yōgo homes, 30.2% of Toku-Yō homes, and 20.9% of Keihi homes. This remarkable awareness of retirement communities especially in the middle class, may be attributed to vigorous advertising, and wide coverage in the mass media.

PART TWO

FUJI-NO-SATO

Chapter 6. The Setting and the System

1. The Setting

Location

Fuji-no-sato is located on a large Peninsula about 2 hours by express train southwest of Tokyo. The Peninsula has been developed as a major tourist attraction and resort area for Tokyo metropolitan residents. Historically, Yasunari Kawabata's first novel, "The Izu Dancer," depicted the area around Fuji-no-sato some sixty years ago. Beautiful mountains lie along the central spine of the Peninsula, separating the eastern and western Coasts. Because of its proximity to Tokyo, the eastern Coast is the one better developed for tourism.

The Peninsula has just about every desirable condition for a sightseeing and resort area in Japan. Because of the fine scenery, it is a part of a larger national park which includes Mt. Fuji. Since it also belongs to one of the most volcanically active regions in Japan, there are good hot springs here and there, around which cities and towns have been developed. In fact, tourism on the Peninsula started at the hot spring resorts about a century ago. Then as today, a trip to a hot spring was one of the most popular recreational activities among the Japanese, especially among the elderly. Traditionally, the Japanese believe that hot springs are good for relaxation and health, particularly for

chronic impairments such as arthritis and back pain. Today, the Peninsula offers, in addition to hot springs, a wide range of leisure and sport facilities for the young and the old, and for families. Because it is in a national park, development is in general carefully controlled and nature is well preserved. The unspoiled natural environment attracts thousands of people every year who flee the stifling atmosphere of Tokyo. There are a number of golf courses, tennis courts, places for bicycle riding, and amusement parks. National highways run close to the beautiful coast line circling the Peninsula, so that one can enjoy scenic driving, also. Because of the Peninsula's volcanic origin beaches are few and the coast line is mostly rocky, high cliffs. The water is very clear, and the few beaches attract enormous numbers of beach-goers during the summer months.

The eastern side of the Peninsula, in the middle of which Fuji-no-sato is located, is within the range of a day trip from Tokyo. In the busy tourist seasons, the National Railway increases train service to meet the demand.

The Peninsula is also known for its mild climate; in fact, its name evokes images of a land without winter. While it is a little cooler in summer than in the center of Tokyo, it is much warmer during winter months. Wild narcissus at the southern tip of the Peninsula blooming in early March, marks the beginning of the spring sightseeing season. Although the mild climate makes tourism a year

round business, summer is the busiest season. Trains are jam-packed and cars often run bumper to bumper for several miles. Summer season starts in early July and usually ends in September when the waves become very high, making swimming dangerous. The end of the summer season is generally proclaimed symbolically by a typhoon or two directly hitting the Peninsula.

The immediate area around Fuji-no-sato is a small village devoted to fishing and farming relatively isolated from the major cities of the Peninsula. It takes about thirty minutes by car from the village to the nearest city. The area has different characteristics from other sightseeing spots on the Peninsula; it has, as it were, an atmosphere of cultured taste. This is because a large local railway company has developed the area as a site for resort houses. Today there are a great number of these second homes, most of which are Western-style cottages owned by relatively well-off Tokyo residents. In addition, there are many elite small hotels and "rental cottages," which are leased only in summer. In recent years, many large corporations from Tokyo have built hotel-like facilities for employee recreation and training. Thus, the population in the village multiplies on weekends and in summer when people come from Tokyo to stay there. Prices at local supermarkets are very high, almost equivalent to those in Tokyo.

In short, the area has an established social image as an upper middle class resort place. This means that the

area has a dual structure, being made up of a traditional local village on low land near the small fishing port, where many houses cluster in a small space, and a newly developed resort section on high ground near the railway and highway. The traditional economic structure of the village has disintegrated, and the old time residents are now dependent on revenues from tourism. The main farming in this area is citrus growing, which was once a booming industry but is almost dying now. Likewise, commercial fishing is declining. The catch has dropped sharply in recent years, probably because the local waters have been fished out by modern methods. Consequently, many fishermen have had to engage in the sport fishing business.

Fuji-no-sato stands at the lower edge of the resort section. Since most of the resort section had already been developed at the time of its construction, a large enough space for a retirement community was only available in its lower edge. Although one cannot see the Pacific Ocean from the community, it is only about fifteen minutes' walk to the high cliffed coast line. The community is also fifteen minutes' walk from the railway station, or five minutes by the community's shuttle bus. In the immediate neighborhood of Fuji-no-sato, many resort cottages are scattered in natural woods. There are several coffee shops and a couple of restaurants within walking distance of the community. Streets are wider than the Japanese rural average, but short, curved, and without signs, so that people unfamiliar

with the area often get lost.

Building Structures

The stringent zoning regulations applied to development in this national park have made Fuji-no-sato an unique retirement community in Japan. If one looks at the community from the sky, as it is shown on post cards available at the shop, thirteen white buildings are seen embedded in natural green woods. Besides the buildings, the only visible surfaces are the community's wide streets and a yard at the back of the Community Center. Under the yard a sewage treatment plant is located. Due to the regulations, all buildings are two storied and cover no more than twenty percent of the land that the community owns. The woods are so well protected that the management of the community is forbidden to cut a tree on its own land without prior approval from a local office of the Environmental Protection Agency. Fuji-no-sato is in fact the only retirement community in Japan which is not comprised of one or more high rise buildings but is horizontally spread out.

The community is isolated from the main section of the village. It is secluded by deep woods both from the shopping area near the highway and from the railway station, which also happens to be the nearest place where the community's residents can catch a local bus. While some residents enjoy walking in the woods and take short-cuts to reach these conveniences, the majority take the community's

shuttle bus which runs three times a day, or they call a taxi when the shuttle service is not available. Only nine residents own cars. Because of this geographical isolation and the limited means of transportation, most residents spend their days within Fuji-no-sato itself.

The building structures of Fuji-no-sato are in harmony with the upper middle class social image that the surrounding area espouses. The thirteen buildings, all painted white, brighten the community with reflected sun light. In summer particularly, the contrast between the white buildings and the dark green woods is remarkable. As one crosses a small bridge and walks into the large estate heading toward the center of the community, he will find a great number of small gardens along the wide streets and among the buildings. The gardens are meticulously cared for by the residents and are divided into small plots by volcanic rocks. They are full of various kinds of flowers most of the year, and even in winter the residents grow plants with colorful leaves.

Gardening is the most significant spontaneous activity among the residents. Indeed, the amount of energy that the residents have poured into gardening and the intensity of their interest in it make one wonder whether there may be more to it than a mere hobby activity. (This issue will be discussed in detail in Chapter 10). For instance, many residents do not like to buy young plants from nursery stores; instead, they order the seeds by mail through

catalogs, plant them first in boxes in their living units, carefully monitoring temperature and moisture until the seedlings come out, and when they have grown strong enough replant them in the outside gardens. The residents also buy soil for their gardens because the area is covered with volcanic rocks and there is little soil. Early residents repeat story after story about the hardships they endured in order to make gardens by removing the rocks by hand, as if the gardens are symbols of their contribution to the community, or indelible marks they have made on it.

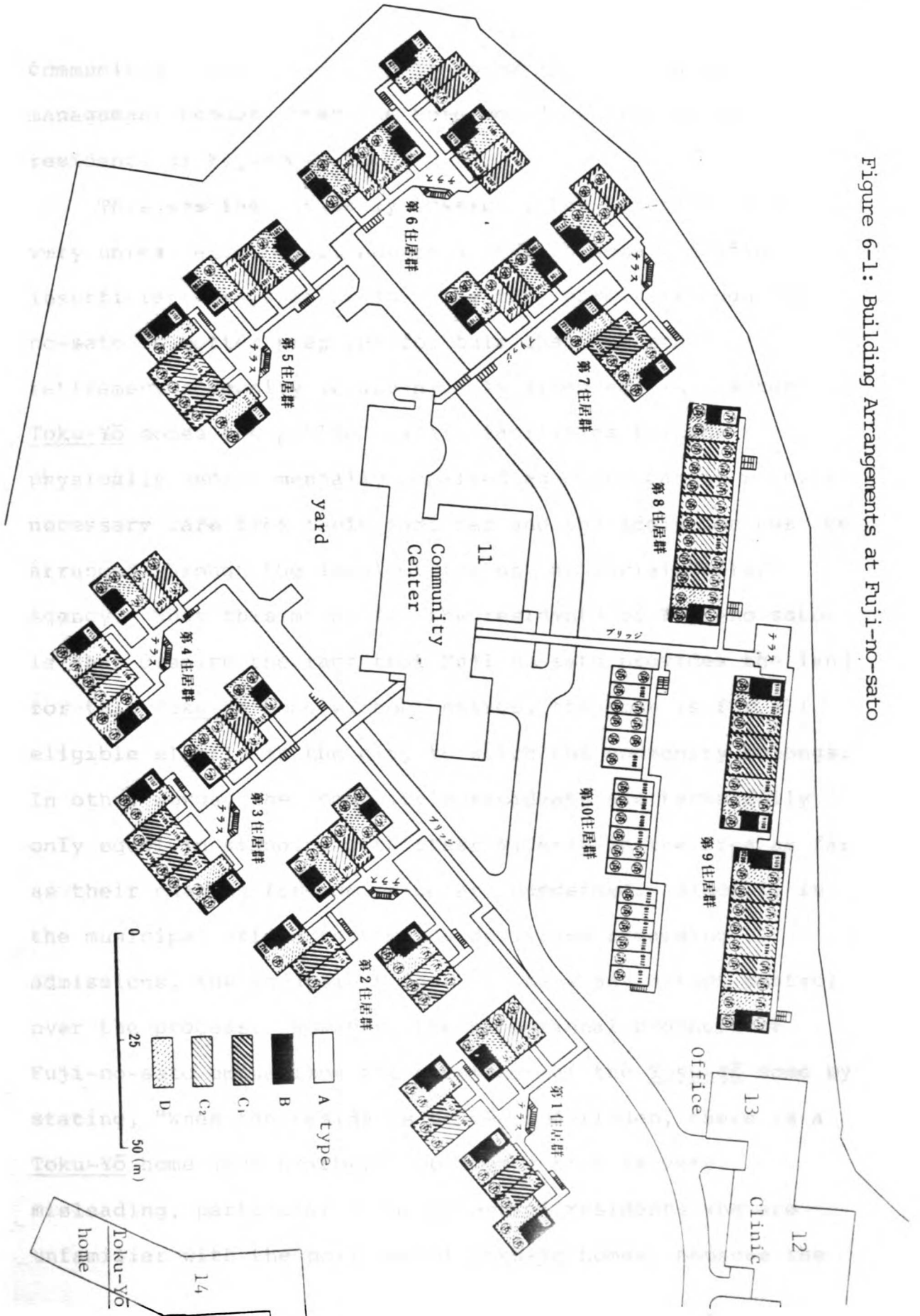
Many first-time visitors, prospective residents and potential developers alike, who came to see a Yūyrō home for the aged, do not hesitate to reveal their astonishment, making such remarks as "Oh, this is not like a home for the aged (Rōjin Hōmu). It's so bright, and it's so modern." For those who had already seen the picture of the community, it was more like a confirmation than a surprise. Many residents vividly remember their first encounters with the community. Mr. Sonoda, a 73 year old retired bank executive, is a resident who illustrates the social image problem that Japanese retirement communities have. In order to win over his son and daughter-in-law that his decision to move in was sane, he invited them to Fuji-no-sato to see with their own eyes that this was not one of those Rōjin Hōmu. Although this worked well enough, Mr. Sonoda complains that he does not know how to explain to his former neighbors and his friends that Fuji-no-sato is not an

ordinary home for the aged. If he tells them that it is a Rōjin Hōmu, people immediately suspect that he has family problems, which is not the case. Eventually he decided not to use the word, "home for the aged," and to tell others who have not seen the community that he is living in a famous resort place.

The arrangement of the thirteen buildings is illustrated in Figure 6-1. Ten residential buildings (#1 to #10 in the Figure) surround the Community Center (#11). Except for the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Buildings, the Community Center and the residential buildings are connected with one another by bridges at the second floor level so that the upstairs residents can directly walk to the Community Center. The Clinic (#12) and the Administrative Building (#13) are located near the entrance of the community. The arrangement of the buildings represents the determination of the management that Fuji-no-sato should be built in such a way as to facilitate community-building activities among the residents.

There is one building (#14) on the ground which is not part of Fuji-no-sato. There is a 50 bed Toku-Yō home at the south-east corner of the community's estate, which is run by a separate non-profit social welfare organization. Although Fuji-no-sato has a relatively large clinic of its own, the existence of this Toku-Yō home represents the planning of the management of Fuji-no-sato to cope with the long-term care of dependent residents. Like other retirement

Figure 6-1: Building Arrangements at Fuji-no-sato



communities which have Toku-Yō homes in their estates, the management thought that the home would be used by the residents of Fuji-no-sato.

This was theoretically possible, but is practically very unrealistic. Reliance on a Toku-Yō home signifies insufficient preparation for long-term care (although Fuji-no-sato is better prepared for this than any other retirement community in Japan). As discussed in Chapter 5, Toku-Yō homes are public welfare facilities for the physically and/or mentally impaired aged who cannot receive necessary care from their families and the admission must be arranged through the local office of the Social Welfare Agency. What this means for the residents of Fuji-no-sato is that despite the fact that Fuji-no-sato provides the land for this Toku-Yō home without charge, the home is for all eligible elderly in the city to which the community belongs. In other words, the community's residents are technically only equal in standing with other elderly in the area as far as their chances for admission are concerned. Since it is the municipal office that makes decisions regarding admissions, the management does not have any direct control over the process. However, the promotional brochure of Fuji-no-sato emphasizes the existence of the Toku-Yō home by stating, "When the residents become bed-ridden, there is a Toku-Yō home just nearby." Obviously this is very misleading, particularly for potential residents who are unfamiliar with the policies of Toku-Yō homes, because the

brochure gives the false impression that the residents will have priority for admission. In fact, some residents who were led to believe this, expressed their resentment of the management when they later learned the actual relationship between Fuji-no-sato and the Toku-Yō home.

It appears that free use of the land by the Toku-Yō home may have been one condition set by the city government in granting approval for the construction of Fuji-no-sato. For it is the city, which had no Toku-Yō home until this was built, that has gained the most by this arrangement. It also seems that there may have been a tacit agreement that the city agreed to allocate some beds for the residents of Fuji-no-sato in return for the latter's provision of the land. This is a common practice in similar situations in Japan.

What happened, however, is that despite such a possible tacit agreement, all beds of the Toku-Yō were occupied soon after its opening and it became very difficult for the community's residents to be admitted to the home. On the average, only three out of the fifty beds have been filled by residents of Fuji-no-sato.

Here it may suffice to point out that although the community buildings and the Toku-Yō home are geographically close, they are separated by woods so that in order to visit the home from the community, one needs to leave the community, cross a small bridge near the entrance, and then walk on a narrow road about half a mile. Except for a group

of volunteers who visit the home every weekday, and a physician at Fuji-no-sato who also serves the home, the community and the home have very little interaction.

Residential Units

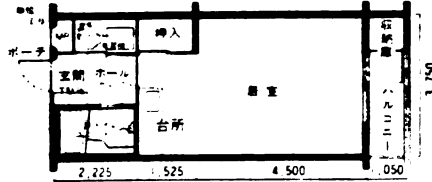
Fuji-no-sato has 288 residential units in ten buildings. However, it is operated with 280 units as full capacity. Four units are occupied by the staff and two or three units are either used as additional guest units or are kept vacant for emergency housing. Although the budget of the community is based on revenue from 280 units, since it has a waiting list of applicants, the management has accepted two or three extra residents in order to make the occupancy of 280 units constant in spite of occasional turnover. As of October 1, 1982, 281 units were occupied by 372 residents, of whom approximately 230-250 were full time residents.

There are four types of units (Figure 6-2). Type A is a studio. Type B is a small one bedroom. Type C is also a one bedroom, but its livingroom and the bedroom are more spacious than those in the Type B unit. Type D is a two bedroom. Type A is for a single resident, Types B and C are for either a single or two residents, and Type D is for two residents. Two occupants are the maximum in B, C, and D units. There are 36 Type A units, 66 Type B units, 112 Type C units, and 66 Type D units. Each unit has its own balcony where the residents put flower pots and dry their laundry.

Figure 6-2: Four Types of Residential Units

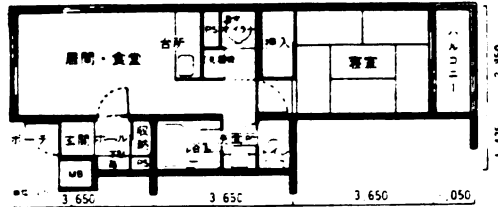
Aタイプ

36戸 / 総面積34.8㎡ (約11坪) / バルコニー3.9㎡ / 専有面積30.9㎡



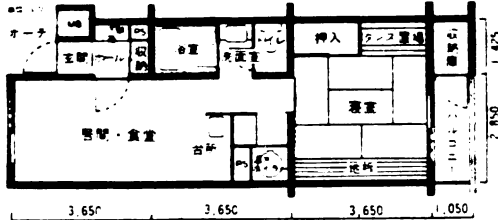
Bタイプ

66戸 / 総面積42.8㎡ (約13坪) / バルコニー3.0㎡ / 専有面積39.8㎡



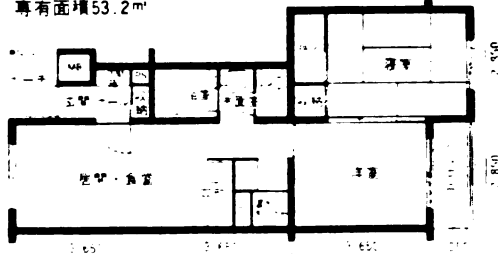
C1, C2タイプ

C1(和)72戸 C2(洋)40戸 / 総面積49.5㎡ (約15坪) / バルコニー4.5㎡ / 専有面積45.0㎡



Dタイプ

66戸 / 総面積56.2㎡ (約17坪) / バルコニー3.0㎡ / 専有面積53.2㎡



Type A has a large room used both as a livingroom and a bedroom, and most residents in this type of unit use beds. At the opposite side from the balcony, all units have a small kitchen. There is a Japanese style bath, a toilet, a washstand with a large mirror, and space for a washing machine. Each unit has a 300 liter (79 gallons) hot water tank, operating on off-peak electrical power. The availability of hot water is far less prevalent in Japanese houses than in the United States, which in turn makes this an attractive feature of Fuji-no-sato. Further, an electric heater plate is installed underneath the living room floor.

Emergency and safety measures are important characteristics of Fuji-no-sato. Standards far exceed the existing regulations. As pointed out earlier, there are no regulations on retirement communities per se, and Fuji-no-sato has adopted its own standards. For instance, the buildings are fire-proof. Because the whole Peninsula is known for earthquakes, due to volcanic activity, buildings are also designed to resist earthquakes stronger than the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1924. A heat detector is installed in each room, which in case of fire triggers an alarm in the warning system at the Administrative Building. However, there are no sprinklers. The sole energy source is electricity and gas is not used--this is very rare in Japan even in retirement communities because electricity costs more than gas. Cooking is done with an electromagnetic plate, a safe invention experimentally used at this

community, which heats only the contacting surface of pots or pans. If accidentally left on, it presents no fire hazard. Moreover, an emergency nurse call is installed in every room, and in the toilet and the bath as well. The nurse calls are push-button style and are connected with a warning system in the Administrative Building. They are also tested every three months. Lastly, handrails are installed in the bath and the toilet. How the safety monitoring system functions will be discussed shortly. The telephone at each residential unit is an extension of a trunk line connecting the facility as a whole with the outside. All incoming calls from outside are received and transferred by a staff operator to the appropriate resident. Meanwhile the residents can make outgoing calls directly from their telephones. There seems to be three benefits for the residents in this form of service. First, while it is not expensive in Japan to have one's own telephone service, here at least the residents do not have to pay for installation, maintenance, and other miscellaneous fees, except for the calls they make. Second, all calls inside the community are free of charge, and many residents take advantage of this privilege a great deal. Third, even if they are not at their units when calls come, the staff takes messages.

All units are unfurnished. The management provides only the electromagnetic cooking plate, so that the residents need to bring the furniture and appliances they

need. Interestingly, many residents actually bought new goods rather than use their old, familiar ones. This is interesting because in gerontology it is often argued that making new living space comfortable with familiar furniture and other personal things may soften relocation stress and facilitate adaptation. Both practical and cultural reasons are conceivable explanations of the new purchase trait. Old appliances may have been worn out, or old furniture may not have fit into the new small space. What is more, they could afford to buy new goods. Yet the cultural reason may be more plausible. The Japanese tend not to change their residences frequently, and except for moves ordered by their companies, they usually do so when they buy or build new houses, or buy condominiums. It is not unusual to start a new life at a new place with new furniture and appliances.

Although the residents complain of inadequate space in their units, many of them make their rooms quite comfortable. Furniture is small and simple but generally of good quality and relatively expensive. More than half the residents use beds instead of Japanese futon. There is also a tendency to separate the kitchen from the living room with furniture or a curtain. Many widows have their deceased husbands' photos either on the wall or on the furniture, usually with a small but sudan, or Buddhist altar. They offer tea and rice to the altar every morning, and some of them grow flowers to offer also.

Although there is a dining hall and a hot spring bath

at the Community Center, the residents can cook and take a bath at their units if they wish to do so. Newspapers and milk are delivered at the doorstep by nearby stores upon request. However, mail is delivered to the Community Center and the staff sorts it into each mail box. This brings residents to the Community Center frequently.

Community Center

The Community Center is located in the center of Fuji-no-sato in order to make it readily accessible to all residents. The location has the symbolic meaning that this building should be the center of their life, and to a great extent this is true.

The Community Center is the stage of all indoor group activities. It has five large rooms for this purpose: a craft room for woodblock printing and wood carving groups; a room called the "salon" for singing, record concerts, discussions, knitting, and various Christian meetings; a couple of Japanese tatami rooms for traditional Japanese singing and music, Japanese chess, and tea ceremony; and a larger "meeting room" which can seat eighty to ninety people at one time and is used by groups with large memberships. It is also in the meeting room that the general meeting of the Residents Association is held, as well as meetings between the management and the residents, and funeral ceremonies. The schedule as to the use of these rooms is kept by the staff and posted on a blackboard at the

Community Center.

The hot spring bath is at the north-west corner of the Community Center. The women's section of the bath is larger than the men's, due to the larger number of female residents. The men's and women's baths are separated by a small laundry room where one washing machine and one dryer are provided. At one time, 30 men and 45 women can use the bath. However, since the bath rooms are open between 3:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m., with the peak time at around six o'clock, it is rare that more than a dozen people are at the bath at a given time. Most residents have their favorite time for taking a bath, usually either before or after dinner. Hot spring water is piped in from a nearby well, and it is extremely salty; but it is said to be good for arthritis, rheumatism, skin diseases, and gynecological disorders. Although opinions of the residents vary as to the healing effectiveness of bathing, all agree that it does relax their bodies and warm them, especially in winter. With the dining hall, the hot spring bath room is one of the two most important settings for social interaction; news and gossip are exchanged there.

The Community Center also has four guest rooms for families and friends of the residents, and for general visitors including prospective residents who experience a taste of Fuji-no-sato before making a final decision. Next to the guest room section there is a small room where barber and beauty parlor services are offered once every two weeks.

There is also a shop in the Community Center, which is run by the management, selling non-perishable goods such as bathroom tissue, tooth paste, detergent, cooking seasonings, and other miscellaneous things, including soil and fertilizer for gardening. At the corner of the shop there is a small office where two or three staff work. This office is open for the daily needs of the residents, whereas the main office at the Administrative building handles other paper work. The residents report to this office various maintenance problems in their units, make requests for room cleaning, and make reservations both for guest rooms and for meals at the dining hall. A local bank provides service there three times a week.

There is a porch in front of the main entrance of the Community Center. The shopping shuttle bus is parked here and leaves three times a day, once in the morning and twice in the afternoon. Each trip takes one hour. It is also at this porch that the staff sell fresh produce to the residents every Tuesday and Friday. Since the vegetables and fruits are not only fresher than at the local stores, but also less expensive, the sale is very popular. Many residents come out early, wait ten to fifteen minutes for the sale, and pounce on the best items when the sale opens. It is a scene like a bargain sale at a department store, and some residents are disgusted with the frantic manner of the others. A local bakery also brings freshly baked breads and pastries to sell at this sale.

A couple of announcement boards, one for administrative notices and one for the Residents Association, are on the wall between the main entrance and the shop. The staff post announcements such as the names of new residents, funeral schedules, and other service-related messages. Minutes of the monthly executive meeting of the Residents Association and other important Association news such as negotiations with the management on various issues, are regularly posted on the other board. Although both boards are equal in size, there is a clear contrast in that the administration's board is generally full of messages, the Residents Association's board is sparsely used. (Note that it was on the administrative board that I posted both my greeting message and my request for cooperation with the interviews.) This board is one of the two effective means of communication from the management. The other is the use of a public address system. Each residential unit has a loudspeaker, and the staff at the Administrative Building announce important news, such as the changes in the hours of the Clinic, cancellations of the shuttle bus, or temporary breakdowns of the hot spring bath, over the public address system.

The dining hall is on the second floor. It is cafeteria style, and as many as 200 people can eat at one time. However, the number of residents at any meal time is far below this number. Three reasons for this may be pointed out. First, since the meal time is one hour for

breakfast (7:30-8:30) and one and a half hours for lunch and dinner (noon-1:30, and 5:00-6:30) and the residents tend to leave the hall when they finish their meals, it seldom happens that they stay at the hall throughout each period. It is not a Japanese cultural characteristic to make a daily meal time a sociable event as it is in French or American cultures. Despite this cultural difference, the dining hall is a very important place for the residents to meet other residents; if they do not use the dining hall and the hot spring bath, they simply lose some of the limited opportunities to meet other residents and make conversation. The lounge at the end of the dining hall has several couches with a large T.V. set and newspapers, but only a handful of residents spend time there, either before or after meals. Moreover, even though Fuji-no-sato has full occupancy, not all residents are full-time members of the community. Finally, of the permanent residents, not all take meals at the dining hall--a significant number cook at their own units.

The residents need to make reservations for meals at least one day in advance and to purchase coupons which they put into a box at the cafeteria when they receive their trays. Regular users, however, need not make daily reservations, although they are required to pay for the meals they missed unless they have cancelled their standing reservation. Some disoriented residents who often forget whether or not they have eaten are excluded from this

practice and are dealt with tolerantly.

Weekly menus are posted in the dining hall. Also, there is a comment box provided by the Residents Association. Comments on the food are generally negative, sometimes positive. Summaries of comments are reported on the announcement board of the Association. The Association also uses the negative comments as material for its negotiations with the director and the head staff of the dining section.

Special foods are prepared on seasonal and traditional occasions and they are very popular among the residents. On such occasions the number of the residents at the dining hall swells significantly.

Administrative Building

The Administrative Building is a relatively small one-story building which stands beside the community Clinic. Both buildings are near the entrance of the community. The staff there handle fiscal management, give tours for visitors, process paper work for the staff, operate the telephone, manage the various warning systems, and so on. During the night, a male security guard is on duty there.

The Administrative Building is the information center of Fuji-no-sato. On the wall on one side of the building, there are three important data boards indicating the daily location of each resident. The "residence" board carries name plates of all residents, arranged by unit number.

Black name plates indicate that a given resident is in the community, whereas red name plates mean that a resident is not staying in the community. The night guard arranges the name plates on this board every morning before he leaves, using the information on the 24 hour warning system (described shortly). The second data board is the "hospitalization" board--here the names of the residents who are currently hospitalized either at the Clinic or at outside hospitals are listed. The third is the "absence board" which lists the names of the residents who are away from the community for several days or longer. Residents are encouraged to report where they are going, for how long, and to give telephone numbers where they can be reached in an emergency.

Fuji-no-sato has a very advanced technological warning and safety monitoring system. The system is divided into two parts. One is the fully automatic warning system for building safety measures, such as heat detectors and for the physical plant (mechanical room, sewage treatment room, etc.). The other part concerns the safety of the residents in their units. This device has three main functions. First of all, it responds to the nurse call. The staff's reaction to the nurse call is swift. They first telephone the resident in order to ascertain whether it is a false alarm or a real emergency. If the call is affirmed, or when there is no answer after five or six rings, then the staff call the nursing station at the Clinic to send a nurse to

that unit. During the night, this device and a nurse call device within the Clinic are connected, so that both the night guard and the duty nurse at the Clinic can respond to emergency calls.

The second function of the device is the 24 hour warning. When the residents do not leave their units during a 24 hour period, that is, when they do not lock the front door of the unit from outside during this period, an alarm goes on automatically in the Administrative Building. When this happens, the staff calls the resident in that unit to make sure he/she is all right. If the resident is not feeling well or has some problems, the staff calls the nursing station at the Clinic. However, when the staff cannot reach the resident this way, it becomes rather complicated, for the staff is required to locate the resident and confirm his/her safety. Usually, one of the staff at the Administrative Building visits that unit, but before that, the staff may call the office at the Community Center to ask if this particular resident has been seen that day (which generally works because most residents visit the shop or other parts of the Community Center during the day). But the search continues until a staff member confirms that the resident is all right. Since the 24 hour warning system is regarded as non-emergency both by the staff and the residents, and in most cases the alarms are false, particularly on rainy days, the staff's reaction is routine. They are quite aware of the habitual repeaters, the

residents who often do not lock their door when they leave their units. However, when the alarm is set off at units which rarely show a false alarm, the staff respond to it quickly.

The 24 hour warning system is important because it works as a preventive measure; possible health crises of the residents are checked in their early stages by this system. In most cases--besides the false alarms, of course--when the residents do not leave their units for one full day, it is very likely that they are not feeling well and not eating properly, but do not think they are sick enough to push the emergency button. Detecting this kind of situation through the alarm system, the staff at the Clinic can evaluate the seriousness of an illness, give proper advice, and follow the ill resident's condition.

There is only one case in the history of Fuji-no-sato in which a resident's life was actually saved by the 24 hour warning system, and it occurred during my research. In fact, I happened to be at the office when this occurred, and I was able to observe the incident closely. At 11:30 a.m., December 8, the 24 hour alarm flashed indicating the unit of Mrs. Kaneda, a 75 year old widow. Since she was one of the false alarm repeaters, a male staff member said, "Oh, it's Mrs. Kaneda. Again?" But a female staff member quickly called her unit. There was no answer. She then called the office at the Community Center to ask whether Mrs. Kaneda had been seen there or whether she had had breakfast in the

dining hall (which could be easily checked by going through the meal coupons). The answer was no; no one had seen her that morning, and she had not eaten breakfast in the hall. After this, the female staff member went to Mrs. Kaneda's unit herself and found that while she could hear a sound from the T.V. set, the door was locked from inside and Mrs. Kaneda did not answer. Feeling that this might be an emergency, the staff rushed back to the office, got the master key, and returned to the unit. When she opened the door, she saw Mrs. Kaneda lying in her living room with her eyes half open but unable to speak. Using Mrs. Kaneda's phone, the staff person called the nursing station at the Clinic. The head nurse and the physician came and checked Mrs. Kaneda's blood pressure. It seemed obvious that Mrs. Kaneda had had a massive stroke. A later examination of her room suggested that she may have had it sometime late the previous night.

Mrs. Kaneda was quickly hospitalized at the Clinic. The physician instructed the staff to call her children, because she judged that there was a great risk that Mrs. Kaneda might die. Although the life of Mrs. Kaneda was saved and she later regained her consciousness, her body was severely paralyzed. She could now survive only with intravenous nutrition.

The third function of the 24 hour warning system is that it tells the staff instantly whether a given resident is in his/her unit any time of the day. A green light by

each unit number on the device stays on when the resident is inside the unit, but it goes off when the door is locked from outside. Thus, by looking at the lights on the device, the staff can judge the presence or absence of any resident without the need to visit the unit. At ten o'clock every night, the night guard records the presence/absence of residents in all units by this method. Since night comes early at Fuji-no-sato, ten o'clock is fairly late in terms of the activities of the residents. The night guard checks this again at seven o'clock the following morning to see whether any resident came back after ten o'clock. On the basis of this record, the guard rearranges the residence board before he leaves at nine o'clock.

The residents are quite aware of the role of the Administrative Building as the information center, and take advantage of it. For instance, when a resident calls a fellow resident and does not get an answer, he/she then calls the office to find out whether the fellow resident is temporarily out of the unit or away from the community for some days.

Clinic

Fuji-no-sato has a Clinic with 18 beds, the largest medical and health care facility in all the retirement communities in Japan. The Clinic also provides 24 hour nursing care, a rare case in Japanese retirement communities. Japanese law defines a clinic as a medical

facility which has at least one full time physician and less than twenty beds, and a hospital as a medical facility with at least three full time physicians and more than twenty beds. Thus, in a realistic sense, the Clinic at Fuji-no-sato has the maximum capacity for the clinic in a retirement community.

The Clinic is on the ground level of a two story building; the second floor has several apartments for single staff. Besides the eight inpatient rooms, ranging in size from a private room to a couple of four bed wards, the Clinic has the following rooms: a waiting room, a small laboratory in which blood and urine samples are tested, a treatment room, a physician's office, a nursing station, a special bath room for bed-ridden patients, an X-ray room, a laundry room with heavy duty equipment, and a small room for short-term keeping of a corpse. Generally, machines and equipment are very sophisticated. The Clinic also has its own ambulance, another rare case in Japan, due to strict regulations governing ambulance services.

A 72 year old woman is the full-time physician at the Clinic. She once retired from her private practice in internal medicine, but she was hired by Fuji-no-sato in 1981 as its fourth physician. (Major problems at the Clinic such as hiring physicians will be discussed in Chapter 8.) She is on duty from Monday to Friday, and lives in the community on weekdays but goes back to her home over weekends. On the first and third Saturdays of each month, a cardiovascular

specialist who is an authority in the field comes to the Clinic from another city. On other Saturdays, a part-time physician, a man in his mid seventies, comes in from the neighborhood. He is also a retired physician, a former president of a large public hospital, and he is also on call in emergencies when the full time physician is not available. No physician is on duty on Sundays.

The outpatient service is open only in the mornings, and in the afternoon the physician makes her rounds of inpatients and visits the Toku-Yō home. Although the Clinic is open for people in the neighborhood, outpatients are mostly residents of the community. On average, 23 residents visit the Clinic each morning.

The health care program for the residents has two features. Intensive checkups are given to all residents once a year. Nearly all permanent residents and even some people who are not yet living at the community come to have this checkup. The other is a monthly individual consultation with the physician. However, the latter program remains more or less nominal because the residents can visit the Clinic freely rather than on an assigned date and can meet the physician. Since the majority of residents have some kind of chronic illness and get medicine only every other week (due to Japanese law), in most cases the residents visit the Clinic once in two weeks and have their blood pressure measured on a regular basis.

Due to the well developed medical insurance system for

the aged (those over 70 years old), residents' out of pocket payments for both outpatient and inpatient services are very small (note that the new restriction on Rōjin Byōin-- hospitals with more than 60% aged inpatients--applies only to hospitals and not to clinics).

The management of Fuji-no-sato apparently planned to take advantage of the medical insurance system for the aged in such a way that it built realistically a maximum capacity clinic which could function not only as an acute inpatient unit and outpatient health care facility, but also as a long-term care facility. In this way both the management and the residents could benefit from the government-supported medical insurance system. Partly because of the financial benefit from this method and partly because of their lack of knowledge as to the importance of long-term care, the management thought it possible that a Clinic with 18 beds and 24 hour nursing care could meet both the acute medical and ambulatory needs and the long-term care needs of its residents. After four years of operation, however, it became obvious that the mixture of the "cure" and "care" functions of the Clinic was problematic. Nearly all beds are constantly occupied by residents who are either in recovery or chronically physically dependent and/or disoriented. The problem is typified by the need to control the disoriented inpatients who move around the Clinic, particularly during the night when the other inpatients need a quiet atmosphere. Furthermore, the management has become

aware of the change in the government's welfare policies and is preparing for future cutdowns of the medical insurance system for the elderly. Under these circumstances, they have decided to build the first non-public skilled nursing care facility in the community for the residents of Fuji-no-sato (the facility will be completed in fall, 1984).

2. The Operating System

Fuji-no-sato is a life-care retirement community, a type which I defined in Chapter 1 as a facility that, through a certain type of contract, provides not only residential accommodations specifically designed for the needs of the elderly but also skilled nursing care for the physically and/or mentally dependent residents. I also pointed out that due to the lack of standards, there is great variation in the actual terms of the entrance contract, the type and extent of services, and so forth even among the life-care plans, let alone among different types of retirement communities. Despite this somewhat chaotic situation in the industry the operating system of Fuji-no-sato has become an important model for life-care communities.

The ownership of the property of Fuji-no-sato resides with the management, and not the residents themselves. The residents purchase, as it were, the right to live in the community throughout their life time, and the right to

receive the promised care and services. Theoretically, the management defines Fuji-no-sato as "social property" as opposed to individual property or governmental property, the notion representing the philosophy that the private sector should play a greater role in the area of services to the aged.

There are restrictions on age and health status for membership in the community. One must be 60 years old or older (for a married couple, either husband or wife must meet this requirement). Applicants must also be able to take care of daily necessities by themselves, that is, they must be able to live independently. However, no physician's examination is necessary; lay staff at the head office in Tokyo make judgments after interviews with the applicants.

There are two types of fees, an entrance fee and a monthly fee. Upon signing the entrance contract, the resident pays the entrance fee, which varies according to the size of the unit and the number of occupants. As of 1983, this fee was \$56,792 for a Type A unit (single occupancy); for a Type B unit, \$65,958 (single occupancy) or \$97,667 (double occupancy); for a Type C unit, \$71,708 (single occupancy) or \$103,417 (double occupancy); and \$113,167 for a Type D unit (double occupancy). The entrance fee is to cover, among other things, costs for land acquisition, construction, and overall maintenance of the facility, and the long-term care fee, which is \$12,500 per person. The management estimated that the average length of

stay at Fuji-no-sato would be 15 years. The entrance fee is refunded in proportion to the length of stay if the contract is terminated within ten years by the resident or by his/her death.

The monthly fee is \$121 for single occupants and \$196 for double occupants, regardless of the size of the unit. The annual operating cost, more than half of which goes to the staff's salaries, is covered by the monthly fee. Even though the contract states that the monthly fee may be raised or at least reexamined once every two years in accordance with general price increases, the success of Fuji-no-sato made it possible for the management to hold to the original fee until October 1983. (The tension-laden process of negotiations between the management and representatives of the Residents Association will be discussed in Chapter 9.)

The monthly fee, however, does not include utilities (electricity, water, telephone), or meals. According to the information brochure published by Fuji-no-sato, the average total expense per month is \$359 for a single occupant and \$682 for a couple. Needless to say, these amounts do not include such expenses as clothes, leisure activities, trips, etc.

Now, is it expensive to live in Fuji-no-sato? In Chapter 1, I mentioned that this community has received extensive coverage in the mass media, which has consistently reinforced a social image of Fuji-no-sato as a deluxe place

for the wealthy elderly. However, I also pointed out that Fuji-no-sato is intended not for the wealthy aged but for the middle income elderly and the management claims that the residents represent the middle to upper middle income strata. As far as monthly living expenses are concerned, it does not seem to be expensive. Thus, the main issue is whether or not the entrance fee is excessive; the mass media say it is whereas the management says it is not. In black and white, the figures do look high. Yet this issue cannot be judged on the surface, but should be examined with regard to the idiosyncratic situation of each resident--i.e., from the viewpoint of the resources and alternatives that he/she has in preparing for safety and security in old age.

The value of home ownership in Japan, particularly in the Tokyo metropolitan area, is a most relevant factor in this regard. The vast majority of the residents came from the Tokyo area, and many of them sold their houses to move to Fuji-no-sato. In other words, home ownership is in many cases the crucial resource for the residents.

The case of Mr. and Mrs. Shirase may be used as a typical example of the strategic value of selling a house. Mr. Shirase, 70, is a retired freelance journalist. After graduating from an elite university, he worked for a large newspaper as a journalist for thirteen years. Then he became a freelance journalist in politics and social issues. While working as a journalist, he translated several books into Japanese, in order to earn supplemental income. It was

an unstable job, particularly in Japan where one's financial security and social status are largely determined by the company one works for. After he reached 60, Mr. Shirase recalls, it was getting difficult to earn sufficient income, and he became anxious about his financial security in old age.

Mrs. Shirase, 66, is a housewife; she never worked after marriage. They have no children and never thought of an adoption.

Shortly after World War II, the Shirases managed to buy land in a suburb of Tokyo, on which several years later they built a modest house. Soon the post-war reconstruction began, and then came the "land boom" as the Japanese call it. The price of land in the metropolitan area literally skyrocketed. The former farmland around their house is now an upper middle class suburb, and the value of their house has gone up remarkably.

The Shirases had modest savings for their old age. However, because Mr. Shirase was self-employed, he did not get a lump sum retirement payment nor a good pension. He and his wife have a national pension. So, when his wife found an advertisement for Fuji-no-sato and discussed its feasibility for them with Mr. Shirase, both agreed without much argument to sell the house and to move there. For it was apparent that if they continued living in their house, they would run into financial difficulty which would get worse as they grew older.

Although Mr. Shirase did not disclose the price of their house (with its land, of course), they were able not only to pay the entrance fee for a Type D unit but also to purchase a small one bedroom condominium in Tokyo, which they rented out, and still keep a comfortable amount in savings. Both Mr. and Mrs. Shirase said that financially they felt more secure than ever, and agreed that without selling the house, this could not have been possible.

It could have been a completely different story if the Shirases had a child and wished to leave the house to the child. The point I would like to make is that the high value of home ownership in the Tokyo area often easily offsets the seemingly staggering entrance fees, so that ordinary middle class people can and do qualify as residents of Fuji-no-sato.¹

Chapter 7. The Residents

1. Demographic Characteristics

As of October 1, 1982, 372 residents occupied 281 units at Fuji-no-sato. There were 134 men (36%) and 238 women (64%). While the management tried to maintain at least 40% of men, their actual percentage has been less than this since the second year of the community. In 1982, the age range was from 51, a wife whose husband was over 60 years old, to 96 years. The overall mean age was 70.0, the men's mean age was 72.2, and the women's was 68.8. The mean age at the end of the first year (1979) had been 66.3 years old. Thus, the residents are still young-old.

Table 7-1 shows family status and occupancy patterns of the 281 residential units. Let us first look at the family status in the units. Eighty-three units (29.5%) are occupied by married couples; 74 units (26.3%) by widows; 39 units (13.9%) by never-married women; and 21 units (7.5%) by widowers. Thirteen units (4.6%) are occupied by divorced women; and 8 units (2.5%) by divorced men. Seventeen units (6.4%) are technically occupied by married men and 14 units (5.0%) by married women. These men and women are married, but only husbands or wives have signed the entrance contract with an indication that the unsigned spouses will soon sign the contract, too. Four units (1.4%) are occupied by never-married men.

Table 7-1: Family Status and Residential Pattern

Family Status	Number of Units		Residential pattern							
			full-time	part-time	second home use		total			
married couple	83	29.5	55	<u>66.3</u>	6	<u>7.2</u>	22	<u>26.5</u>	83	<u>100%</u>
widows	74	26.3	57	<u>77.0</u>	3	<u>4.1</u>	14	<u>18.9</u>	74	<u>100%</u>
never-married women	39	13.9	25	<u>64.1</u>	4	<u>10.3</u>	10	<u>25.6</u>	39	<u>100%</u>
widowers	21	7.5	20		--		1		21	
divorced women	13	4.6	9		2		2		13	
divorced men	8	2.5	8		--		--		8	
married men	17	6.4	2		1		14		17	
married women	14	5.0	1		3		10		14	
never-married men	4	1.4	2		1		1		4	
mother-daughter	4	1.4	4		--		--		4	
sisters	2	0.7	2		--		--		2	
friends (women)	1	0.4	--		1		--		1	
married brother and never-married sister	1	0.4	--		--		1		1	
Total	281	100%	185		21		75		281	
			65.8		7.5		26.7		100%	

Of the remaining eight units, 4 (1.4%) are occupied by mother-daughter pairs. Two units (0.7%) are taken by sisters, and 1 unit each (0.4%) is occupied by female friends and a combination of a married brother and a never-married sister, respectively.

In terms of family relationships, there is one pair of sisters who occupy two neighboring units, and a trio of a brother and sisters who occupy two more. There is also one case of a never-married woman in one unit with her mother and sister next door.

Overall, 198 residents (53.2%) are married; 99 (26.6%) are widowed; 52 (14.0%) are never married; and 23 (6.2%) are divorced. Yet there are distinct gender differences. Among 134 men, 101 (75.3%) are married; only 21 (15.7%) are widowed; 4 (3.0%) are never-married; and 8 (6.0%) are divorced. In sharp contrast, of 238 women, 97 (40.7%) are married; 78 (32.8%) are widowed; 48 (20.2%) are never-married; and 15 (6.3%) are divorced. Thus, while about three-fourths of the men are married, the women's marital statuses are divided into three major groups--married, widowed, and never-married. Particularly important to notice is the large number of never-married women, many of whom lost their marriage opportunity due to the War. (In addition, 8 out of 78 widows or 10.3% are war-widows.)

So in summary, almost two-thirds of the residents are women and roughly one-third men. As elsewhere, marital status differs sharply by sex. Three-fourths of the men are

married and one-sixth widowed. But among women, two-fifths are married, one-third are widowed, and one-fifth single. Not only do women predominate, but the majority of them are also maritally unattached.

Next, let us examine occupancy patterns in Table 7-1, or how people use their apartments. They are listed in three ways: full-time, part-time, and second home use. Full-time means that a resident has settled down in the community completely and is living there permanently. Part-time residence means that the resident lives in the community at least one-third of an average month. Second home use indicates that a resident visits his/her unit only occasionally for short periods. Overall, out of 281 units, 185 (65.8%) are occupied by full-time residents; 21 (7.5%) by part-time residents; and 75 (26.7%) as second homes. Full-time residents account for 66.3% of married couples, 77.0% of widows, and 64.1% of never-married women. In addition, this is the predominant pattern among widowers, and divorced men and women. Therefore, due to the large number of non-full-time residents, the average population in Fuji-no-sato is in the 230-250 range as opposed to the official population of 372.

This residential pattern has three important implications. (1) These non-full-time residents have good social resources still under their control. While they were able to obtain the right to live in Fuji-no-sato in their life time and the right to receive long-term care there,

thereby having prepared for the worst, as it were, they have other places to live and are financially capable of doing so. (Note that even among those who sold their houses to pay the entrance fee, there is a tendency to buy small condominiums in the Tokyo area.) They may be relatively young and still working as is typical among the never-married non-full-time residents. (2) The second home or vacation home, or part-time residence clearly serves many people as a gradual transition to full-time residence in the community. This is important to bear in mind because as will be discussed in Chapter 11, the community does not have effective socialization structures. The gradual transition may have a great adaptational value. (3) On the other hand, the significant number of non-full-time residents may weaken cohesion among the residents in the community.

It is of the utmost importance to examine the presence or absence of surviving children among the residents. Needless to say, the 52 never-married men and women have no children. Of 237 cases (married couples being counted as one case, married men and women, widows, widowers, and divorced men and women), overall 84 (35.4%) have no children. 126 (53.2%) have at least one child. Seventeen cases (7.2%) have only adopted children. The facts are not known about 10 cases (4.2%), most of which are divorcees who did not answer.

As apartments have disproportionate numbers of the never-married, especially spinster women, so Fuji-no-sato has an over-representation of the childless, over one-third of the cases falling into this category.

Furthermore, of 126 cases with at least one child, 84 (66.6%) have at least one son; 38 (30.2%) have only daughters; and in four cases (3.2%) the sex of the child(ren) is not known.

Japanese tradition prescribes filial support in the order of males: the eldest son —> a younger son —> husband of the eldest daughter —> husband of a younger daughter —> adopted son. Despite drastic social changes and the official abolishment of the family (ie) system, this remains an important frame of reference in current Japanese society. Moreover, the traditional dōkyo arrangement is a total support mechanism for the aged parents in which the financial, social, practical, and emotional needs of the aged are to be met in one family setting. It involves a great burden for the supporting children, so great in fact that it is believed that only one's own children could bear it; the magnitude of the burden could only be balanced by the magnitude of the reciprocal obligation, i.e., parental responsibility for bringing up children, and needs the normative backup of the society. It has become increasingly difficult for the elderly to realize the traditional pattern even if they have natural sons. Understandably, it is even more difficult to do so when they have only daughters or

adopted sons, and no new norms of filial support have been established.

Thus, all in all, the residents at Fuji-no-sato appear to be greatly disadvantaged in terms of children as a resource for old age security. However, provided the surrounding social situation of the elderly in Japan, this may work either way. That is, having children may interfere with one's freedom to sell one's property--a usual necessity for getting into Fuji-no-sato. I will discuss this issue further in the last chapter.

2. Socio-economic Backgrounds

The level of education for both men and women at Fuji-no-sato is remarkably high, not only for their generation but even by today's standard. For instance, of 134 men, fully 76 (56.6%) are university graduates (about 18 years of schooling). Moreover, they are disproportionately from the elite handful of Imperial Universities. Thirty five men (26.1%) finished various higher schools (about 15 years of schooling), 12 (9.0%) finished various middle schools (about 11 years of schooling), and 6 (4.5%) had only the compulsory primary school education (6 years of schooling). The education of 5 men is not known. Note that the men were educated under the old Imperial Japanese educational system where the opportunity for higher education was limited to a tiny portion of young people. Roughly speaking, the higher

schools (15 years of schooling) were equivalent to today's university education (16 years) in terms of social class. Thus, 82.8% of the men have, it may be said, had university level or higher education by current standards. In short, they are the intellectual elite of their generation as a whole.

The educational level of the women is also very high for their generation. Under the old system, women had far less opportunity for education than men. Among 238 women, 28 (11.8%) had women's college education (about 15 years of schooling); 52 (21.8%) graduated from women's higher schools (about 13 years of schooling); 129 (54.2%) had education as high as girl's higher schools (about 11 years of schooling); and 15 (6.3%) had only the compulsory primary school. The education of 14 women (5.9%) is not known. In their day, the girl's higher schools were practically the highest school for liberal arts, and only a small portion of specializing women had further training than this level. That is, the social significance of the girls' higher schools under the old system may be roughly equivalent to college/university education today. Therefore, it is remarkable not only that a little over half of the women had girls' higher school education but also that as much as 33.6% of them received even higher education. Like the men, the women at Fuji-no-sato are the intellectual elite of their generation.

The prestigious occupations of the residents reflect their higher educations. Table 7-2 shows the distribution of seven occupational categories among men. Those men who are not full-time residents and still have jobs, such as part-time senior executives, are included in the table. The purpose of this table is to show the highest occupational position that each man in the community has attained, and the working men have already reached their peaks. As shown, of 134 men, 50 (37.3%) reached executive positions in private corporations, or the top ranks in government bureaucracies. The private corporations are generally major ones in Japan. Twenty-seven men (20.1%) rose to mid-level managerial positions in private corporations or in government bureaucracies. Fifteen (11.2%) were the owners in self-employed business such as stores, restaurants, and so on. Only 13 (9.7%) ended their careers without reaching managerial positions. There are 9 men (6.7%) who were university professors. Four (3.0%) were physicians, three as directors or high administrators of large general hospital, and one was in private practice. Another 4 (3.0%) were teachers in high schools and junior high schools, 3 (2.2%) were professional writers, and 2 (1.5%) were clergymen (one Christian minister and one Buddhist priest). The occupational backgrounds of 5 men are not known.

Thus, all in all, the men at Fuji-no-sato achieved very successful careers. Since educational level is a strong prerequisite for successful careers in Japan--far more so

Table 7-2: Men's Occupations

Occupations	number	%
business executives and high public officials	50	37.3
managers in business and public office	27	20.1
self-employed business (stores, restaurants, etc.)	15	11.2
non-managerial workers	13	9.7
university professors	9	6.7
M.D.	4	3.0
teachers (high school and junior high)	4	3.0
professional writers	3	2.2
lawyers	2	1.5
Christain minister, Buddhist priest	2	1.5
Not known	5	3.8
Total	134	100%

than in the United States--this result is quite understandable.

Meanwhile, women's occupational careers by marital status are shown in Table 7-3. Occupational careers other than "housewife" and "no job" mean at least 15 years' full-time work. Overall, of 238 women, 132 (55.5%) are housewives, followed by 33 (13.9%) in non-managerial private or public sector positions; 27 (11.3%) teachers in high schools or primary schools; 17 (7.1%) self-employed in businesses such as stores, restaurants, etc. Ten (4.2%) had no jobs--never-married women and divorcees who could live without working. Six women (2.5%) were teachers in nursery schools, of whom 4 were the directors of their own schools. Four (1.7%) were university professors and 4 were in managerial positions in private corporations. There are 2 physicians (0.8%). Occupations of three women are not known.

As far as women are concerned, it is more important to examine occupational careers in terms of marital statuses than in overall terms, because while married women did not need to work necessarily, many other women had to support themselves. It is not unexpected that of 97 married women at Fuji-no-sato, 80 (82.4%) were full-time housewives, and only 14 (14.5%) had careers.

Among 78 widows, 52 (66.6%) were housewives, 7 (9.0%) were regular workers in companies and bureaucracies, and 7 were teachers in primary and secondary schools. 10 (12.8%)

Table 7-3: Women's Occupations by Marital Status

Occupations	Marital Status									
	married		widowed		never-married		divorced		total	
housewife	80	82.4	52	66.6	--	--	--	--	132	55.5
non-managerial workers & public employees	2	2.1	7	9.0	21	43.6	3	3	33	13.9
teachers (high school & primary school)	8	8.2	7	9.0	10	20.8	2	2	27	11.3
self-employed (stores, restaurants, etc.)	2	2.1	10	12.8	1	2.1	4	4	17	7.1
no job	--	--	--	--	6	12.5	4	4	10	4.2
nursery school teachers	2	2.1	1	1.3	2	4.2	1	1	6	2.5
university professors	--	--	1	1.3	3	6.3	--	--	4	1.7
managerial workers	--	--	--	--	3	6.3	1	1	4	1.7
M.D.	--	--	--	--	2	4.2	--	--	2	0.8
Others and not known	3	3.1	--	--	--	--	--	--	3	1.3
Total	97	100%	78	100%	48	100%	15	15	238	100%

were self-employed in business; these being the women who had helped their husbands and after their deaths, took over ownership of the business. There is one widow who was a nursery school teacher and one university professor (1.3% each). Naturally, those who became widows early in their adult lives came to have careers, whereas the late widows did not.

Besides 6 (12.5%) who lived on their inheritance, 42 out of the 48 never-married women (87.5%), had various careers. 21 (43.6%) worked for private companies or government as regular workers, while only 3 (6.3%) rose to managerial positions. There is also a strong tendency toward educational careers: ten (20.8%) were teachers in primary or secondary school; three (6.3%) were university professors; and 2 (4.2%) in nursery schools. In all, 15 out of 48 (31.3%) had educational careers. Two (4.2%) were physicians, and only one was self-employed in business. Since women at Fuji-no-sato had very high education (there is no significant difference between the never-married women and other women in this respect), the occupational characteristics of the never-married women represent what was possible even for the best educated women in their lives. Even today, women's career opportunities are highly limited in Japan, and it was much more so when these women were working. There was little chance for promotion to managerial positions in private corporations or government for women; thus many never-married women in the sample

worked as regular staff. The career of physician was also very limited. In contrast, the field of education has been one of the few areas in which women could find job security and social recognition. For while women in companies usually have to survive explicit or implicit pressure to discontinue their work, though less so for public employees, teachers are rarely faced with such pressure. Therefore, for better educated women, education has been a rare but secure field.

Lastly, of 15 divorcees, 4 have no occupations. Three worked as regular staff in companies or bureaucracies, while 1 reached a managerial position. Three were teachers in high school, primary school or nursery school. The remaining 4 were self-employed, all of them apartment owners and managers. All 15 women were divorced relatively early in their adult lives, and some had only a short marriage. Thus they have supported themselves for a relatively long time.

3. The Process of Moving-In

The vast majority of the residents at Fuji-no-sato came from the Tokyo metropolitan area, particularly from the middle to upper middle class suburbs, the area commonly known by the Japanese as the yamanote district. Their previous living arrangements indicate that while those residents who do not have children were mostly living by

themselves, the dōkyo model was very rare even among those with children, especially sons. However, there is a strong tendency for those with adopted sons to have come from dōkyo arrangements, implying some sort of family trouble.

A strong desire to control one's own fate is an underlying theme in the residents' decision to move to Fuji-no-sato. This is most evident among childless couples, childless widows/widowers, the never-married and the divorced, as well as those with daughters only. These residents did not have the traditional resource, namely sons. They were well aware of this because many of them spontaneously mentioned the absence of sons, the unreliability of daughters, or the fact that they are alone. They were also keenly aware of what would happen in the future as they grow older and more physically frail. As I pointed out earlier, "support" to the aged means the total support in the form of dōkyo. They do not feel that they can depend on nephews or nieces who have their own aging parents or parents-in-law to support. Such relatives may help them when they become dependent, but their assistance will be partial, such as finding a place to live, and not total support. Faced with this uncertain or hopeless future prospect, these residents have taken action while they are financially and physically independent, in order to be secure in their old age.

Meanwhile, those couples and single residents who have their own sons emphasize that they came to Fuji-no-sato in

order to avoid becoming a burden on their children. Some wives said that since they had had such a hard time in taking care of their parents-in-law, they wanted to avoid being a burden by all means. Those residents who have good financial resources gave these reasons straightforwardly because they can still leave substantial money or property to their children. However, other residents who had to choose between their own old age security and their wish to leave property to their children showed emotional ambivalence in their responses. They came to Fuji-no-sato because, I believe, they are highly independent in their thinking and value independence more than monetary considerations.

Among married couples, it is predominantly wives rather than husbands who have been active and enthusiastic about moving to the community. The wives gathered the necessary information, studied various retirement communities, and took their husbands to visit some potential choices although it is the husbands who made the final decisions and settled the contract with the managing organization.

The location of Fuji-no-sato is by far the dominant reason why the residents chose this community over others. Many residents were familiar with the Peninsula and the immediate area, some having visited there occasionally.

PART THREE

SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Chapter 8. "Contract Welfare": Problems and Consequences

Fuji-no-sato is a life-care retirement community which I defined earlier as a facility which provides, through a certain type of contract signed upon entrance, both residential accommodations specifically designed for the needs of the elderly and skilled nursing care for the duration of the resident's life. The relationship between Fuji-no-sato and its residents is, therefore, determined by the terms of contract. Also I pointed out that the meaning of "welfare" is changing for the Japanese, and that the builders of this community advocate "new welfare" for middle-income people. Arrangements such as Fuji-no-sato are called keiyaku fukushi, which means "contract welfare." However, what this innovative concept really means is not very specific, and is poorly understood by the Japanese in general, and the residents of Fuji-no-sato in particular. This is because the words "contract" and "welfare" have specific social meanings of their own for the Japanese, so that when they are combined in one word, its meaning becomes ambiguous and subject to various interpretations. The significance of this terminology problem will become clear later.

Soon after I began field work, I was surprised to hear strong negative, sometimes even hostile remarks that many residents made about the management--the senior staff at the head office in Tokyo, the director of the community, and

their general management policies. They told me with a sense of anger, disappointment, or betrayal about various problems and inconveniences that they experienced in the community. Some senior staff in Tokyo, the local director, and some of his staff perceived these outspoken residents as excessively demanding. Management thought they were doing their best and yet their good intentions were not understood by such residents.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the negative images held by the management and the residents of each other, and the lack of a cooperative attitude on the part of the residents stemming from their different interpretations of contract welfare. In the first section, I will describe four major problems as perceived by the residents, with the management's reaction to each of them. The second section is concerned with some problems in the management itself. In the third section, I will discuss the built-in problems of the notion of contract welfare.

1. Four Major Problems for the Residents

The four major problems for the residents have to do with building structure, the physicians, the director, and the "money-making management policy." These are perceived as major problems by almost all residents although their reactions vary from open accusation to silent resignation. The discussion of these problems is important because it may

reveal what the residents expected and what they did not expect from Fuji-no-sato.

Problems with the Building Structure

There are two problems with the building structure: the noise of flushing toilets, and the heat in the second floor units in summer.

The drain pipes of the upstairs toilets run directly through the toilet rooms of the downstairs units. The pipes are visible, and when the upstairs resident flushes the toilet, the noise is very obvious. In my judgment (our unit was downstairs), the noise is not unbearable, but certainly quite annoying.

There appears to be three reasons why the residents perceive the noise as a major problem. First, for all residents (including myself), the level and type of noise is very unfamiliar. They are used to other noises such as traffic noise, but not this kind of noise. Drain pipes are usually hidden in the walls in Japanese housing. Second, the residents dislike the noise because it offends their sense of cleanliness. The toilet noise is disturbing because it is a noise of human waste. Third, the problem is compounded by its frequency. It is quite natural for the elderly to use the toilet frequently, including late night use, which may waken downstairs neighbors.

There is virtually nothing that the management can do to correct this noise since remodeling would be too

expensive. The director has asked the residents to refrain from flushing the toilet during the night. In response, the residents in several buildings have held meetings and decided not to flush the toilet between about ten o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning.

The second architectural problem is the heat in the upstairs units in summer. The buildings were constructed in such a way that there is no space between the roof and the ceiling of the unit, so that the sun raises the room temperature very noticeably during the daytime and rooms do not cool off even during the night. Of course, this is desirable in winter, but the combined heat and high humidity in summer is, for many upstairs residents, difficult to cope with. Some say that on the worst days, the temperature stays in the mid-eighties (Fahrenheit) all night. As a result, the vast majority of the upstairs residents have had air-conditioners installed at their own expense.

The management has acknowledged the heat problem and has been searching for the best solution, considering this problem more serious than the noise problem. In May 1983, after an one-year study, the management had special equipment installed on the roofs of all buildings in order to ease the heat. According to tests, this should lower the temperature several degrees. The residents' reaction to the renovation during the following summer was mixed; some said there had been a marked improvement, while others saw little difference; but all agreed that it was good that the

management finally responded to their problem positively. In their opinion, the problem was the responsibility of the management in the first place.

In fairness to the management, recall that the builders of Fuji-no-sato intended to make this community available for the middle-income elderly, and had set guidelines in the planning stage aimed at an entrance fee within the range of lump sum retirement payments for middle-income workers. Although the entrance fee has been raised three times in four years, the initial entrance fee roughly met the guideline. If better buildings had been built, Fuji-no-sato would not have been available to the middle-income elderly, which was against the organization's philosophy of new welfare.

This background reason is not well understood by the residents, partly because of insufficient effort of the management in explaining it to them, and partly because practical inconvenience overrides rational understanding on the part of the residents.

Problems in the Clinic

Resident complaints related to the Clinic are also of two kinds: the unavailability of the physician on Sundays and the quality of the physicians.

The residents perceive it a serious problem that no physician is on duty on Sundays, because they expect that any medical emergency should be promptly handled. Their

expectation is based on the brochure, which states, "A physician is always on duty in the community." A full-time physician is actually living in Fuji-no-sato from Monday through Friday, and on Saturdays, either a cardiovascular specialist from an outside general hospital or a physician in the neighborhood comes. However, from Saturday afternoon to Sunday evening, there is no physician in the community. Starting in the spring of 1983, this neighborhood physician has been on call throughout the week, including Sunday. Of course, there is also a city ambulance service for emergencies, and there are several hospitals within thirty minutes' drive. But since Fuji-no-sato is relatively far from the center of the city, many residents are worried about the emergency response system at Fuji-no-sato.

The residents are critical of the management because the latter has not lived up to the claims of their brochure. The entrance contract does not state anything about the availability of the physician; it simply states that it is the responsibility of the management to provide sufficient health care for the residents. However, many residents made up their minds to come to Fuji-no-sato primarily on the basis of the information in the brochure. Relatively few of them actually examined the terms of the contract before making the decision, and many are unaware of its terms, even after they have moved in. Because the brochure is for advertisement, it contains some misleading statements, such as the description of the Toku-Yō home nearby (see Chapter

6). While the residents are quite aware of the difference between the brochure and the contract, they feel betrayed. Why they feel this way will be shortly discussed in the third section. It should be added, however, that the seemingly rigid attitude of the residents is in part due to an incident that happened on an early Sunday morning: one resident had a heart attack and died before a physician was called. It seems that this incident reinforced the residents' fear of their own medical emergencies.

The second problem is the quality of physicians at Fuji-no-sato. The management has had serious difficulties in hiring a reliable physician. The current full-time physician is the fourth person in less than four years. The first physician quit after only seven months. He was 75 years old and apparently could not stand the work load. The second physician was 63 years old when she was hired, but she resigned after one year when she learned of the harsh criticism that some residents had made of her work. The third physician died at 64 after he served for seven months. The current physician came to Fuji-no-sato in September 1981. She is now 72 years old.

Sex and age appear to be the main reasons why many residents do not think the Clinic's physicians are reliable. In Japan, female physicians, except perhaps for obstetricians, are still viewed as less reliable than male physicians, and this view appears to be held more strongly by the elderly than by young people. Dr. Miura, the current

physician, is not only a female but she is over seventy. She was rehired by Fuji-no-sato after she retired from her private practice as a family physician in a large city. Dr. Miki, the part-time physician, is also old; he is now 74 years old, a retiree himself who was persuaded by the director, Mr. Baba, to work for Fuji-no-sato. Dr. Miki was the director of a large general hospital in northern Japan, and he and his wife came to the area near the community in order to spend their retirement years in a mild climate.

Generally speaking, the residents at Fuji-no-sato had received better than average medical care before they moved to the community, and it seems obvious that they expected at least a similar level of medical care from the Clinic. How the residents view the qualities of Drs. Miura and Miki is observable in their reaction to Dr. Shimoda, a cardiovascular specialist. Dr. Shimoda is in his mid-fifties. He is an authority in his field and is also the vice director of a large general hospital. He comes to the Clinic on the first and third Saturday of each month. When Dr. Shimoda is on duty for 3 hours on Saturday mornings, the number of residents who want to see him is scarcely manageable. On average, Dr. Miura, the full-time physician, sees 23 outpatients a day, and the number drops slightly when Dr. Miki, the part-time physician comes (second and fourth Saturdays). In contrast, there are at least 50 people who are seen by Dr. Shimoda each visit.

The competition to see Dr. Shimoda takes place in the following way. The order of appointments is determined on a first come, first serve basis. Like any medical institution in Japan, the Clinic issues a name card for outpatients, which must be put into a box at the reception desk each visit. Appointments follow the order in which the cards are deposited. The outpatient service is open between nine o'clock and noon, and when Drs. Miura and Miki are on duty, the residents come around nine o'clock. However, Dr. Shimoda is so popular that some residents come to the Clinic earlier than nine o'clock to put their cards in the box, returning home until the Clinic opens at nine. This competition has escalated to such an extent that some residents drop by the Clinic for this purpose as early as six o'clock (the front door of the Clinic is never locked).

There is no denying that the management of Fuji-no-sato has been having a serious problem in hiring a reliable physician. According to some residents, the management is simply incompetent in doing this. However, two reasons appear to make this task very difficult for the management. First of all, Fuji-no-sato cannot afford to pay even an average salary to its physician, let alone a salary that attracts the kind of physician the residents want. Secondly, since the community is located in a remote resort area, it is extremely difficult to recruit a physician locally.

Meanwhile, many residents appear to expect a level of care that is unrealistically high for a retirement community. In fact, the Residents Association has been strongly demanding that the management get a physician on Sundays, and even that they build a kind of geriatric hospital. (Note that such a hospital must have at least three full-time physicians and more than twenty beds.) The idea of a hospital is totally unrealistic for Fuji-no-sato, and nearly all the residents, including of course the representatives of the Association, are quite aware of this fact. The Association, however, sticks to this demand.

Four reasons may be offered to explain the seemingly unrealistic attitude of the residents toward their medical care. First, as I pointed out earlier, many residents had received better than average medical care prior to entrance, and expected at least a similar level of care after entrance. Second, good medical and health care is by far the strongest reason why the residents decided to move to Fuji-no-sato. Moreover, their expectation was amplified and consolidated by the information contained in the promotional brochure of Fuji-no-sato (and not on the contract). Third, many residents are frustrated with another unexpected fact: namely that the move to the community has made it more difficult for them to get certain types of medical care. For example, Drs. Miura and Miki practice only internal medicine, and the residents have to commute to outside clinics and hospitals for other

specialities such as ophthalmology and orthopedics (there are two dental clinics in the neighborhood). Commuting is laborious for such residents because public transportation in the area is not well developed; in summer they have to take very early trains in order to avoid traffic congestion. This seems to be the reason behind the demand for a geriatric hospital. Lastly, the residents are not fully aware that acute medical care and long-term care are different, and they tend to misplace their concerns about future care in their demand for a better and larger acute care facility.

In addition to hiring Dr. Miki, management has responded to residents' demands by planning a new 30-bed long-term care facility, which is currently under construction.

Problems Concerning the Director

The director and the physicians are the two most important staff at Fuji-no-sato. Accordingly, the directorship has also been a major problem between the residents and the management. This problem also has two parts: the turnover of directors, and the quality of the present director.

The directorship has been unstable since the opening of Fuji-no-sato. The first director was fired after only six months of service, being incompetent to handle the work. Then for approximately two years, there was a period with

virtually no director. An executive board member in the Tokyo head office served as the non-resident director. During this period, Mr. Baba, the current director (then a section chief in central administration), served as the acting director. Mr. Baba was subsequently promoted to the directorship.

The absence of a director was interpreted by the residents as a sign of the insincerity of the management, not only because the position of the director is very important, but more importantly, this hiatus coincided with the period when the residents were pressing for solution of the other three problems.

The residents' evaluations of Mr. Baba as the director are mixed. Mr. Baba is 41 years old and has no previous experience in serving the elderly. In fact, he was working as a salesman for the construction company which built Fuji-no-sato before being hired by the management of the community.

Mr. Baba is an energetic person and enthusiastic about his work. Some positive comments about him by the residents include: "He's so energetic. He doesn't sit in the office all day, he leads the staff in their work." Or, "He is so versatile. He and the maintenance staff can fix all sorts of problems. They even made a nice barbecue grill in the yard." In addition, Mr. Baba has superb ability in supervision of the staff, particularly the young staff. He spends a great deal of informal time with them, which in

turn makes it possible for him to mobilize manpower outside of regular tasks. For instance, when some section is very busy, staff from another section will help. Thus the maintenance staff usually helps when drivers or ambulance assistants are needed.

On the other hand, some negative comments about Mr. Baba are: "He is too young to be the director. He doesn't have his own family, and didn't even graduate from a university." Or, "He is too impatient to listen to us. He isn't making enough effort to understand our feelings. We would like to talk with him more," or "He's only concerned with making money from us, and he can't understand what 'welfare' is." Mr. Baba is only 41 years old, he is a divorcee, and he only finished high school. While these attributes would not be serious drawbacks for Americans, they are important ones for the residents of Fuji-no-sato to judge the quality of their director. For many residents, the ideal image of a director is a male in his mid-fifties or early sixties, who is a family man and has at least a university education. These criteria indicate a mature man who is able to understand what the residents think and feel, and for them, Mr. Baba is not.

Maturity in this context means the quality of a person which can be attained by aging; namely the ability to understand others--both what is said and what is left unsaid. The expression, "rōjin no kimoichi no wakaru hito" (the person who is able to understand what and how old

people are thinking and feeling) is repeatedly raised by many residents when they talk about Mr. Baba. Kimochi, usually translated "feeling," is a difficult word to translate accurately into English; it generally means both thinking and feeling in a much broader sense than either English word. Indeed, this is a holistic word, meaning to understand a person as a person. By using this phrase, the residents hope that their director should be the person who can not only understand, with a sympathetic mind, their feelings and problems by patiently listening to them, but who also can do something along the lines of their wishes, ideally without their speaking up.

Mr. Baba is very capable at personnel management and fiscal management, the areas wherein he was trained through his previous jobs, but does not possess necessary interactional skills to deal with the residents. He simply does not know what to do in this regard. His problem may be summarized in the following way: he has not done anything particularly wrong, but has done too little, if anything, to show understanding of the residents' kimochi.

The "Money-Making" Policy

A major criticism that the residents hold against Mr. Baba and the management of Fuji-no-sato in general is the profit-making policy which is perceived by the residents to contradict the welfare service policy. For instance, the residents believe that Mr. Baba requires the staff at the

store in the Community Center to make a profit, whereas the goods should be sold to them at wholesale prices. Or, the barber tells the residents that he has to give 10% of his fee to the administration, and adds that he would prefer to give 10% discount to the residents instead. And there are other accusations.

However, these accusations are all totally unfounded, and there is a serious misunderstanding between the management and the residents regarding the principles of service charges. It is true that Mr. Baba tries to generate additional income from the shop and from the barber and other merchants who do business in the community. Contrary to what many residents believe, this income goes into the operating budget of Fuji-no-sato, and has contributed at least in part to the fact that the monthly fee has not been raised for four years. The misunderstanding is due to a lack of clarity about policy; whether the residents who use various services in the community should pay more for those services, or whether costs should be equally charged to all residents in their monthly fees. Fuji-no-sato management has adopted the former policy, but Mr. Baba has not made enough effort to explain the essential difference between the two alternatives. Consequently, as other problems develop, the residents add their suspicion of this policy to what they think of as evidence of profit centered management.

The "telephone fee incident," as it is known by the residents, typifies the problem of misunderstanding and its consequences in the relationship between the residents and the management. It was a symbolic incident in the sense that the good intentions of the management were totally misunderstood by the residents, and the incident more or less permanently cemented a negative image of the management.

As described earlier (Chapter 6), Fuji-no-sato has only one trunk line, connecting it with the outside, and all telephones in the community are extensions of this line. I also pointed out some advantages of this form of telephone service for the residents. The management initially charged the residents a telephone fee which was 30% higher than the fee the telephone company charged. It did not give any explanation of this to the residents. After about two years, one resident who had been a telephone company employee happened to discover the 30% additional charge, and he brought the issue to the Residents Association. The Association studied the issue, making inquiries to the telephone company, and came to the conclusion that the additional charge did not have a legal basis. Accordingly, the Association made a request to the management to terminate this practice and to make refunds of what the residents had already paid.

Several general meetings between all residents and the top staff of the head office in Tokyo were held, and the

latter tried to explain the surcharge. The management failed in this endeavor because the residents were so convinced of their wrongdoing--an interpretation which was supported by the telephone company. The management had a very legitimate reason for the 30% additional charge, which was to maintain a fund for repair and maintenance of the telephone system in the community. Otherwise, the residents would have to be charged a substantial fee for breakdowns.

In the end, the management gave in, stopped charging the additional fee, and refunded each resident the amount they had paid to the community. The residents rejoiced because they thought they got justice. The refund was perceived as an admission by the management of its wrongdoing, and the image of the management was further damaged by this incident. The management will have to decide whether it will re-charge residents for the maintenance of their telephones, or whether it will generate a fund for that, probably by raising the monthly fee.

2. Problems Within the Management

It is undoubtedly true that some of the problems thus far mentioned were caused by inexperienced management. However, it is also true that the management has had good intentions toward the residents, and that responses to such problems have been positive and forward-looking. Management has also learned from mistakes at Fuji-no-sato. Some

problems, particularly those of the building structures, have been avoided in the new retirement communities of this organization; and the management has been making vigorous efforts to explain the management system to the residents at these new communities to avoid similar misunderstandings. Perhaps it is to some extent inevitable that Fuji-no-sato came to have unexpected problems, because it is a pioneer case in the industry. Management had to learn some lessons by trial and error. It is nonetheless important to discuss some problems within management, especially the leadership problem in the head office in Tokyo. The head office is responsible for overall management, while the director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of Fuji-no-sato.

The head office has a leadership conflict between the Departments of Planning and Management. It was Planning who proposed the philosophy of new welfare for the middle-income elderly, formulated the sophisticated long-term fiscal management plan, and supervised the actual architectural design and construction.

Since the opening of Fuji-no-sato, the Department of Management has taken the responsibility for the community and Planning began working on new retirement communities. However, it seems likely that the staff at the Department of Management had not been sufficiently engaged in the planning process and did not fully comprehend the philosophy of the new welfare nor the highly mathematical long-term fiscal plan. Consequently, the staff were unable to provide

convincing explanations about the management system to the residents, which in turn was seen by the residents as a lack of management ability at the head office.

The head of the Department of Management has had two concerns which are very legitimate, but which have had some negative consequences. First, he has thought it financially essential to achieve full occupancy at Fuji-no-sato if the community were to survive. He instructed his staff to emphasize advertising. Partly for this reason, the promotional brochure of Fuji-no-sato contains somewhat exaggerated information. As I already indicated, discrepancies between the brochure and the actual situation at the community have made many residents distrustful of the management. As his second concern, particularly after Fuji-no-sato had achieved full occupancy, he focused on the safe financial management of the community, and for this purpose he required the director to generate as much additional revenue as possible. This was the background behind the director's adopting what the residents saw as a money-making policy.

As I will describe in the next chapter, the head of the Department of Planning took over the leadership of the Department of Management during the series of negotiations with the Residents Association over the proposed increase of the monthly fee, in June, 1983.

It is appropriate here to discuss the role of the board of directors of this non-profit organization. It represents

the Japanese style of non-profit organization boards, which is remarkably different from the American style.

The board of Fuji-no-sato consists of ten directors. The highest position is the president and the next highest is the chairman of the board. However, these two positions are only nominal. Of the remaining eight members, four are representatives of private corporations which initially donated the funds for the establishment of this organization. These positions are also nominal. There is one member who happens to be the chairman of the board of directors of a separate social welfare non-profit organization--the one which owns the Toku-Yō home on the estate of Fuji-no-sato. He is a nominal member, too. Thus, there are only three full-time members of the board who are at the same time staff of the head office in Tokyo, one of whom is an executive board member.

Although it is the chairman of the board who represents the organization and takes the final responsibility (the position of the president is a symbolic one), it is this executive board member in the head office who is in actuality responsible for the activities of the organization. The board itself is a nominal entity which meets only a few times a year. The president and the chairman may be absent at these meetings, and the four company members merely send their representatives. In other words, the board functions more or less as a rubber-stamp organization for passing what is proposed by the executive

board member and his staff. This is the Japanese style in non-profit organizations.

Therefore, the board itself is a nominal entity. It does not take active leadership in policy formations of this organization, nor has it done anything to alleviate the problems at Fuji-no-sato. Real power is held by one person, the executive board member in the Tokyo head office, who has a great influence over the actual operation of the organization and management of Fuji-no-sato. Two other full-time board members from the head office are there to support him. Consequently, the leadership problem between the Departments of Planning and Management is also the leadership problem of this executive board member; being himself an executive of the same organization, he has been unable to arbitrate between the two Departments.

3. Problems and Consequences of "Contract Welfare"

Given that some major problems at Fuji-no-sato appear to have been caused by well-intentioned but inexperienced management, one may get an impression that the residents' reaction has been rather too uncompromising, too rigid, and unrealistic. A sense of betrayal, disappointment, and even distrust of the management prevails among them. They are highly intellectual people and are generally aware of what the management can and cannot do in a realistic sense. Why, then, are they making unrealistic demands of the management?

Meanwhile, the management does not understand why its good intentions cannot be seen by the residents. The staff admit the mistakes they have made, and have taken action to correct them. But it seems to the senior staff that the more they have done for the residents, the more strongly they are criticized. Under these circumstances, some staff, notably the director, have tried to defend themselves by presenting a negative image of the Residents Association and some of the outspoken residents--the image that they are too demanding. However, Mr. Baba and the staff do not realize that by labeling those residents and the Association as too demanding, they are making further communication with the residents very difficult.

Thus, the relationship between the management and the residents and their Association appears to be deadlocked, negatively reinforcing each other's images. How can this be interpreted? A key notion here is sincerity. The residents decided to take an overly accusatory and demanding attitude toward the management when they came to the conclusion that the management was not sincere. On the other hand, the management saw a lack of sincerity in the residents' harsh criticisms and demands. In order to understand what sincerity means for both sides, it is essential to discuss the Japanese meanings of "contract," "welfare," and "contract welfare," which will in turn reveal the culturally built-in problems of retirement communities and other forms of contract welfare in Japan.

Japanese Meanings of Contract

What contract means for the Japanese is quite different from what it means for Americans. Wagatsuma and Rosett (1983) summarize the basic difference on this aspect between the two cultures as follows:

While in the American mind the function of contract is to pre-determine strife and trouble in the future, pre-define dispute, and enunciate rights, contract in the Japanese mind is a symbolic expression or reflection of mutual trust that is expected never to break down and that will work favorably for both parties in case of future trouble. . . . (The) "confer-in-good-faith" and "harmonious-settlement" clauses reveal the basic nature of the Japanese contract.

Thus, for the Japanese, a contract means far more than what is stated on paper. It is a ritual, establishing a new relationship and a mutual commitment to that relationship on the basis of mutual trust. Mutual trust is not possible unless both parties take the relationship seriously--that is, unless they are "sincere." Put another way, the American style of contract may be excessively cut-and-dried and "cold" for the Japanese, because it is based not primarily on the mutual trust of the two parties, but on just the opposite, i.e., their possible distrust in the future.

The contract offered by Fuji-no-sato is no exception to the Japanese style of contract. For instance, it has only one item each on such crucial issues as the management of the residents' health and their medical care:

Item 8: Health Management

The Organization constantly monitors the

health condition of the Resident and provides professional consultations on health, and professional health checkups.

Item 9: Care

When the resident requires care due to illness, injury, or other reasons, and when the physician determines that care is necessary, the Organization provides the necessary care at Fuji-no-sato.

Although the contract is not specific, "care" in Item 9 refers to both acute and long-term care and "the physician" means a physician on contract at Fuji-no-sato, not other physicians. These items simply state the goals, and do not anticipate problem situations, concerning the health management and medical care of the residents. There is no need for further specification because like any contract in Japan, the Fuji-no-sato contract includes the good faith and harmonious settlement clause at the end:

Item 35: Others

For issues not specified in this contract, and for interpretations of each item in this contract, both the Organization and the Resident, in accordance with relevant laws, will mutually confer and deal with in sincerity.

Thus, it is expected by both parties that the definition of health management and medical care, as well as whatever problems may arise in the future, are to be dealt with on an ad hoc basis, with of course mutual trust and sincerity.

It may be quite astonishing to Americans how few of the residents at Fuji-no-sato are familiar with the terms of their contract. Many of them do not even bother to look at

it. To my knowledge, there is not even one resident who has closely examined the terms of the contract, and who is clearly aware of the items on health management and care. There is no need for the residents to be familiar with the terms of the contract; they just assume that they will be able to live at Fuji-no-sato throughout their life time, and that they will be taken care of in the community when they need skilled nursing care, as long as they are paying the monthly fee. For the contract means to them the organization's commitment to these assumptions in exchange for their payment of the entrance fee and the monthly rate.

Japanese Meanings of Welfare

Earlier I discussed the changing meanings of welfare for the Japanese. On the one hand, welfare still means the public support for the needy. On the other hand, welfare is coming to include public well-being--i.e., the welfare of a welfare state. Both meanings are reflected in social policies. But welfare also has a cultural meaning which underlies both meanings at the social policy level. The Japanese use the expression, fukushi no kokoro, which means "the welfare spirit." The welfare spirit denotes the basic attitude of the providers of welfare services.

The essence of the welfare spirit is altruistic devotion of welfare workers to their clients, and this is a highly emphasized cultural value among the Japanese, particularly when the clients are destitute. For instance,

if a welfare worker is a young woman, she is often seen as an "angel" regardless of her affiliation with Christianity because she is serving people who need to be cared for, usually working under inferior conditions. Her self-sacrifice for others has cultural support since it is one of the core values of the Japanese. Or, if the worker is a middle-aged man, the Japanese expect him to be a highly moral person because they assume that anyone who devotes own life to the well-being of others should be a strong person who lives up to important social morals.

Of course, one should not overlook the fact that these social images of welfare workers are stereotypes and mythifications. It is true that because of these images, the working conditions of many welfare workers continue to be poor, for when self-sacrifice is emphasized, the endurance of hardship is not seen as a problem.

The residents of Fuji-no-sato like the phrase fukushi no kokoro very much. Perhaps the notion is more acceptable for their generation than for younger generations. More importantly, however, they like it because they perceive themselves as the beneficiaries of the welfare spirit--Fuji-no-sato is a welfare community after all, and the sponsoring corporation has the word welfare in its name.

On the other hand, I have already pointed out that the builders of Fuji-no-sato advocate the new welfare, which is different from the traditional meaning of welfare, and which does not entail the welfare spirit. The new welfare defines

the relationship between the service provider and the recipient in terms of a contract. It must be an equal relationship, where the recipient is expected to be an independent individual.

In short, there exists a wide gap between the residents' understanding of the word "welfare" and that of the management.

Intrinsic Problems of Contract Welfare

Therefore, it may be understandable that the interpretations of contract welfare made by the management and the residents are quite different. The management incorporates new ideas in the concept, whereas the residents interpret it in the context of the traditional meanings of "contract" and "welfare." The lack of consensus on this is a main reason for the negative relationship between the management and residents. Furthermore, I believe this issue is also part of a cultural and historical problem for Japanese society. For the management, it is imperative to use Western, individualistic suppositions rather than traditional Japanese meanings in the interpretation of contract welfare. Namely, it must assume that its relationship with the residents is always determined by the terms of the contract which the residents signed of their own free wills. The relationship must be based on voluntary decisions of the residents who are intelligent enough to comprehend the nature of their relationship with the

management and independent enough to take responsibility for it. It must be an equal relationship, with finite responsibility for the management.

However, the management has not been successful in establishing the new notion of contract welfare, because it has not taken steps to free the concept from traditional cultural meanings. For instance, as we have seen, the contract used by Fuji-no-sato itself is a typical contract in Japan; it simply states the commitment of the management to certain goals, with the assumption that management will negotiate with the residents, with sincerity and mutual trust, for the best possible solution of unforeseen future problems. Similarly, the management does not have a unified view on welfare among its senior staff. The head of the Planning Department holds the Western, individualistic view and he is a theoretical leader of new welfare, whereas the executive staff member supports the traditional meaning of welfare. As a result, the management has been making some compromises. Perhaps the best example is the fact that the management has become the guarantor for some residents. The contract requires each resident to designate one guarantor who agrees to take all responsibilities if that resident becomes unable to pay the monthly fee or if he/she becomes unable to keep the terms of the contract. Legally speaking, this seems odd because one party to the contract becomes the guarantor of the other party, but the management explains that it does this because their organization is a welfare

organization. Thus, when one resident whose guarantor was the management suffered from a massive stroke, was severely paralyzed and ran out of financial resources, the management as his guarantor had to support him.

Meanwhile, the residents' interpretation of contract welfare is very straightforward. Armed with the traditional meanings of contract and welfare combined in one concept, it has made their position extremely strong vis-a-vis the management. Let me explain this. The residents view the contract as a symbol of the management's commitment to their comfort, their health, and their long-term care. They expect that since the management will respond to future problems with sincerity, it cannot do anything contrary to their wishes. This expectation is amplified by their view that the contract is not merely a guarantee of good faith, but a welfare contract; namely a contract which guarantees the "welfare spirit" on the part of the management. In other words, the residents do not perceive their relationship with the management as equal at all. Quite the contrary, they think of themselves as the recipients of altruistic services, the traditional dependent position vis-a-vis the service providers. They can thereby gain the moral upper hand over the management by emphasizing their weak position and by mobilizing moral rather than legal pressure on the management. The strength of the residents is further consolidated by their moral position as old people in Japanese society.

Thus, the residents need not care about the terms of the written contract. Any information about Fuji-no-sato, whether it is in the promotional brochure or verbal explanations given by some staff, is as legitimate as the contract itself, given the traditional sincerity of the management. When they discovered that the management did not adhere to the spirit of what they had heard or read, they felt disappointed, betrayed, and suspicious of all the management's motives. Of course, this suspicion grew and was eventually confirmed by the residents when they saw the unsatisfactory response of the management to developing problems. The fatal blow to their trust in management's sincerity was, in the residents' view, "the money-making policy." For money-making is exactly opposite to the welfare spirit.

Moreover, once either side is convinced that sincerity has been lost in a relationship, it means that the very foundation of the relationship has disintegrated, and the relationship is more or less irreversibly damaged. I believe this is the background of the residents' outspoken and demanding behavior, even to the point that they have become unrealistic.

However, the residents have their dilemma, too, which can best be expressed in the question: Can money buy the welfare spirit? Traditionally, the welfare spirit, i.e., devoted service by welfare workers, is valued because the service recipients are socially disadvantaged people. Self-

sacrifice or devotion to welfare work is highly valued by the Japanese because it is an altruistic act for the needy and the destitute. However, the residents of Fuji-no-sato are not poor or socially disadvantaged; on the contrary, they are from a better-than-average social stratum. The residents are aware that the question has a definite answer in Japanese culture: money cannot buy the welfare spirit. The welfare spirit is too valuable to be acquired by money. Consequently, they are on the horns of another dilemma; they are ambivalent, because they are not sure to what extent they can legitimately demand service based on the welfare spirit.

The very strength of the residents' logic on contract welfare, nonetheless, is a kind of double-bind for the management. The management cannot satisfy demands based on the traditional meanings of contract and welfare, because the demands are endless and would result in bankruptcy. It simply cannot be sincere and at the same time provide services with the welfare spirit, and it is inevitable that serious problems would develop in the relationship. The difficulty for the management can be seen when one realizes that culturally-rooted meanings are very difficult to change, and that such changes do take a long time. Until/unless the meaning of "contract welfare" is socially agreed upon by the Japanese, or at least by the management and the residents, the current problem will persist, and the management of Fuji-no-sato will continue to bear not only

its legal responsibility under the contract, but also its social responsibility as a welfare facility in the traditional sense.

In conclusion, like the physical design of communities like Fuji-no-sato, the philosophy of contract welfare is as yet too innovative for the Japanese, and in some aspects even incompatible with Japanese culture.

Chapter 9. The Residents Association

The Residents Association is the only formal organization for the residents of Fuji-no-sato. It is a formal organization because (1) it formally represents the interests of all residents vis-a-vis the management and is recognized by both; (2) its membership is in effect mandatory; (3) representatives are selected in a systematic way; and (4) each representative is assigned a specific position on the Executive Committee.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the functions of the Residents Association in terms of their significance to social integration. The chapter consists of five sections. In the first section, I describe the historical background of the Association. The composition of the Association and the selection process of the representatives are the topics in the second and the third sections, respectively. The fourth section is concerned with the Association's activities for its members, and the last section discusses the Association's activities vis-a-vis the management.

During the course of this research, there were significant developments in the Association's activities and functions, and I was able to observe these changes.

1. Historical Background

The Residents Association was formed by the early residents in 1979, the first year of Fuji-no-sato, for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding among themselves and achieving a harmonious life. It is important to note that the Association was not formed in the first place as a formal negotiating organization which would represent the interests of the residents to the management. The management initially proposed the formation of a three part advisory council for better management, consisting of five representatives from the residents, five from the management, and a few professional scholars in the relevant fields. However, this proposal was not given serious attention by either side and remains up in the air. This was partly because the management did not make active efforts for its formation (such as recruiting qualified scholars), and partly because as major problems (discussed in the previous chapter) developed, it was a natural consequence that the Residents Association became in effect the residents' negotiating organization. I will describe this process shortly.

Upon my asking why the Residents Association was formed in the first place, a resident who had served during the first year of the Association said:

There weren't many of us in the first year. We were very busy with ourselves in settling down. In the early fall of that year, I think, someone suggested the formation of the Residents Association. This person

had known that the residents at another retirement community (the first community built by this developer--Fuji-no-sato is the second one) had an organization of their own. All of us thought it a good idea. Because, you know, we were strangers when we came here, but we would be living here until we die. Fuji-no-sato is our last place to live, so it was natural for us to have some kind of an organization in order to get to know one another well and to live harmoniously.

Thus, two male residents visited their sister community to study how the Association had been formed and what it was doing. The residents of Fuji-no-sato modeled their Association after the older one. However, aside from practical information such as the way of selecting the representatives and the amount of the membership fee, there were very little that they could learn; the older residents association was more or less inactive. This became a problem for the Residents Association at Fuji-no-sato, too. They simply did not know what the Association should do in order to promote mutual understanding. Various hobby groups were being formed independently by the interested residents, and trips and other general activities were planned by the administration. As a result, the Residents Association remained inactive in the first year.

Although the Association was still doing little in the second and third years for the promotion of mutual understanding, they began feeling pressure to take some action on the developing problems. There were, among the rank-and-file residents, growing concerns about the problems and growing criticism of the management. However, despite these pressures, the Residents Association maintained a

cooperative and conciliatory position toward the management in the second and third year. Of course, the Association made requests for constructive steps to ease the problems; hoping that the management would respond positively to their requests. It was the opinion of the Executive Committee of the Association that if they openly confronted the management, the long-term repercussions on their relationship would be quite serious. Accordingly, the Executive Committee persuaded the concerned residents to withhold their open criticism of the management and to take a wait-and-see attitude.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, however, the management failed to respond as the Executive Committee had hoped. Pressures on the Committee mounted. Particularly after the telephone fee incident, it became extremely difficult for the Executive Committee to control the growing criticism among the residents. The Committee itself came under the residents' criticism, because of its conciliatory position toward the management.

As a result, the representatives elected in the fourth year included several outspoken residents, and the Executive Committee took the approach of confronting the management openly. The new Committee was inaugurated in April 1982, and four months later I began field work. This Committee established very strong leadership for the first time, not only because it came to represent the frustrations and expectations of many residents, but also because it was

headed by a President who introduced new ideas for the promotion of mutual understanding among the residents.

2. Composition of the Residents Association

According to the by-laws, membership in the Residents Association is voluntary, but every resident is well aware that it is in effect mandatory. No one can openly dispute the purpose of the Residents Association, and membership signifies one's public support of that purpose. It is not problematic if a member is inactive, but it is problematic if one decides not to join the Association. Intentional non-membership requires strong reasons. The non-membership of those who do not settle in the community could be excused, yet it is noteworthy that even part-time residents join the Association. In other words, there is a strong normative pressure to join, and there are only a few residents who intentionally do not belong to the Association.

Membership means essentially two things. The member must pay a monthly membership fee of \$0.50, which is used to cover the operating costs of the Association, such as copying the minutes of the meetings. In addition, a member is expected to serve the Association by becoming a representative.

The tenure of the representative is in principle one year, but may be extended for one additional year if the situation requires. In fact, many early representatives served for the Association for two years, not because any of them wished to do so but because there were few permanent residents at Fuji-no-sato. Following the Japanese fiscal year, the term of the representative is from April to the following March.

Non-members are subject to sanction by other residents. The cases of Mr. Kadota and Mr. Kōmoto are two typical examples. Mr. Kadota is a stern isolationist; not only does he not join the Association but he also avoids any interaction with other residents and even with the staff. He told the representative who came to ask for his membership that he had nothing against the Association, but that he wanted to avoid having anything to do with it. He never attended the residents' meeting in his building. Other residents in the same building thought that Mr. Kadota was not cooperative and saw him as a kawarimono, an odd-ball. However, since Mr. Kadota was a passive non-member, the residents in other buildings did not know that he was not a member.

In contrast, the case of Mr. Kōmoto illustrates public sanction. Mr. Kōmoto was once a member; he even served the Association as a representative. However, he withdrew his membership after a disagreement over the issue of whether or not the Resident Association can represent all residents.

He argued that since each resident signed a contract with the management individually and there would always be opposing views among the residents, the Association cannot represent all residents. His view was rejected by other representatives, and he withdrew his membership in protest.

After this incident, Mr. Kōmoto began speaking up at public meetings between the management and all the residents where major problems were being discussed, usually in a tension-filled atmosphere. Mr. Kōmoto stated before speaking his own opinion on the issues that he was no longer a member of the Association and thus he had to express his opinion because the Association could not represent his view. Since the Executive Committee members were trying to negotiate the management with the unified front with the support of other residents, Mr. Kōmoto's remarks were seen by them as extremely disruptive and uncooperative. Furthermore, since the management knew this, it politely ignored his views, too.

Because Mr. Kōmoto proclaimed publically that he was an outright disturber of the harmony of the residents, he began being avoided by other residents. In fact, the avoidance of interaction was the strongest social sanction at Fuji-no-sato. Mr. Kōmoto became increasingly isolated and his dissatisfaction with living at Fuji-no-sato increased.

It should be emphasized that Mr. Kōmoto is the only resident who has publically taken a stand contrary to the Residents Association. The other residents passively

support the Executive Committee, that is, they remain silent at public meetings, some of them speaking in favor of the Committee. It is safer to be silent in order not to be misunderstood by the fellow residents. Some of the residents think that the Executive Committee is too demanding and unrealistic, if not childish, but realize that whatever concessions they can get from the management will be to their own benefit.

However, this kind of passive, self-protective attitude among the rank-and-file residents has allowed the escalation of resident-management conflict to such an extent that some residents have begun worrying about the long-term impact of the negative relationship. They fear that they and the Executive Committee have driven the management into a corner, so that they might lose interest in continuing the operation of Fuji-no-sato. However, since an expression of such a view is very likely to be misinterpreted by other residents as taking the side of the management, they remain silent. This concern was strongly revealed in my interviews and in private conversations with me.

3. Selection of Representatives

In this section, I will describe the process whereby building representatives are selected and the process of filling posts on the Executive Committee from among the representatives. The Executive Committee consists of twenty

representatives, two from each of the ten buildings. Although the selection of the building representatives is left to the residents in each building, all buildings have adopted the same method, namely open consensus. In addition, every building has adopted a policy that unless a resident has special reasons such as ill health, every resident becomes a representative in turn. No resident should represent his/her building for more than two terms. This was adopted not to share the honor, but to spread the burden, as few residents want to do it. Each building is expected to have at least one male representative.

Generally, the residents in each building hold a meeting in March (as the term of the representatives is from April to March in the following year), and at the meeting the outgoing representatives nominate new candidates for the coming year. Sometimes, the former have already talked with the latter in order to obtain informal consent. There has never been even one case in which the nominated residents were opposed by other residents. Interestingly, after four years, many buildings are running out of new candidates because a good portion of the full-time residents have already served the Association and there are a significant number of part-time residents. In a couple of years, there will be some buildings whose residents have to serve a second turn.

It is important to note that voting has never been exercised by the residents at Fuji-no-sato. Voting is seen

as a public disclosure of failure to gain consensus, the worst outcome for the residents. Indeed, voting is incompatible with the traditional Japanese method of decision making; the Japanese try to resolve differences of opinion behind the scenes, informally, so that when the issue is brought up formally in public, there is always a consensus among the participants.

The method of electing the officials in the Executive Committee follows this Japanese tradition, too. The Committee consists of a President, a Vice President, three Treasurers, three Secretaries for General Affairs, as well as three standing committees which are: (a) the four-member Committee on Dining Hall Operation, (b) the three-member Committee on Environment, and (c) the four-member Committee on Problems in Medical Care. The leadership is completely dominated by men; the President, Vice President, the Chief Treasurer, the Chief Secretary for General Affairs, and all chairmen of the standing committees are all men. The female representatives support the men by doing miscellaneous work, such as making copies for distribution, keeping notes of meetings with the management, and so forth. Female representatives have never spoken at negotiating meetings with the management. Both men and women take this division of labor for granted.

Electing the President and Vice President involves more delicate behind-the-scenes maneuvers because these positions are the core of leadership. The outgoing President holds an

informal meeting with the other leaders of his Executive Committee, usually in late March when they have a list of new representatives from all buildings, in order to discuss whom they should ask to become the President and Vice President from the list. The outgoing President and some of the other leaders meet selected candidates to gain their consent to take those positions. The candidates usually decline the request (making some ostensible excuses such as there may be better qualified persons), are pressed to reconsider, and accept the request reluctantly. This process is a ritual often practiced among the Japanese; it has a symbolic significance for the candidates because anyone elected in this manner, i.e., against their wills, has a way out if any contingencies develop for which he is held liable.

After the new President and Vice President are informally determined, these two leaders will discuss whom on the list they should ask to take certain other leadership positions, meet with their choices for these positions, and gain their informal consent. Only after this informal process is accomplished, usually between the middle and the end of April, a general meeting is convened and the new Executive Committee composition is approved by all the residents. Since the necessary informal steps have been taken, there has never been a case of opposition raised at the formal meeting. The men are very skillful at this traditional method of selecting the leaders not only because

they had been socialized to it throughout their careers, but they had also been the elites of the system; a significant number of them had risen to executive positions in corporations.

Here it is necessary to discuss the characteristics of the leadership of the 1982-1983 Executive Committee, since a new pattern emerged in the selection of the building representatives and consequently new leadership was established in the Executive Committee. Earlier I pointed out that the leadership in the first three years took a conciliatory position vis-a-vis the management, despite the growing frustration of the rank-and-file residents over the handling of the major problems. The leaders came under the criticism by the residents as being "too soft." Although the criticisms were never raised publicly, it seemed natural that many buildings sent "hardliners" as representatives in March 1982. How did the residents know who the hardliners were? The hardliners were a handful of male residents who had usually spoken up at the negotiating meetings between the residents and the management; they demonstrated their abilities in asking sharp questions or in openly attacking the management.

Another important characteristic of the Executive Committee was that despite many hardliners, the President was a man who preferred a rational, task-oriented approach over the use of open hostility. When he spoke at the meetings, unlike other hardliners, he never seemed

emotional, but always talked softly while pointing to the key questions. Although he was unable to lead the hardliners in the Executive Committee into his position, he gradually became respected by the other residents. He also gained respect by proposing and initiating new and welcome ideas about the Association's activities for its members.

When this leadership group retired in April 1983, they became, so to speak, a group of "old guards." Thus, when the management proposed the increase of the monthly fee for the first time in June 1983, they were consulted by the new leadership and eventually remobilized in order to take the active leadership in the negotiation with the management over this issue. This process will be discussed shortly.

4. The Association's Activities for the Members

Despite the original purpose of the Residents Association, the Executive Committees in the first three terms did practically nothing to promote mutual understanding among the residents. It may be correct to say that these early leaders did not know what to do; perhaps the most important thing they did was to buy traditionally arranged flowers for the funerals of members. Since the administrative staff planned various general activities for the residents without consulting the Executive Committees, the early leaders felt that they had nothing to do.

However, the leadership in 1982-1983 introduced for the first time, some new ideas and put them into practice. Three new activities may be described. Soon after the Executive Committee headed by Mr. Sonoda (the President whom we met in Chapter 5) was inaugurated, he proposed to his Committee that under the difficult circumstances (i.e., existence of the major problems) it was essential for the Committee to inform the members of their activities. The Committee adopted this as a major policy, and began distributing the monthly report of its activities to each resident. This report had formerly been posted monthly on the Association's announcement board at the Community Center. As a second measure, the Committee proposed that residents hold building meetings regularly. The representatives in each building were instructed to take the leadership for holding these meetings. The actual frequencies varied from monthly meetings in some buildings to once in three months in other buildings. The Association paid for tea and sweets served at the meetings. The purpose of the meetings was to enhance mutual understanding by providing an opportunity for the residents in each building to meet together and exchange their views. Soon, the meetings started functioning to pipe up requests and problems from the rank-and-file residents, through the representatives, to the Executive Committee. Unfortunately, as will be discussed in the next section, the Executive Committee was unable to adjust conflicting requests, but

simply passed them all to the director.

The most important measure by Mr. Sonoda's Committee was to start visiting hospitalized members on a regular basis. The committee met several times and included detailed goals in the by-laws, so that this system would continue as an official activity of the Association. The purpose of this system was stated in the by-laws.

This by-law provides that we visit our hospitalized members at regular intervals. Such members lead lonely lives at the Clinic here, or in outside hospitals, and our contact with them is inclined to cease.

There were discussions over such issues as how often the visits should be made, what should be brought, who should go, how the traveling expenses should be covered, whether or not lunch should be paid by the Association, and so on. The most heated discussion was over the issue of whether or not hospitalized non-member residents should be included in this system. Since nearly all residents were members, this was more likely a hypothetical question, but the Executive Committee members were eager to make the by-laws perfect so that there would be no ambiguities. In the end it was decided that since this was the official activity of the Residents Association, non-members should be excluded.

Visits to hospitalized people are a traditional Japanese custom known as omimai, and this is well practiced by the Japanese today. It is a kind of courtesy call to show sympathy and to wish a quick recovery. Omimai is not

only an important custom for the Japanese in general, but it is most relevant to life at Fuji-no-sato. The residents are generally very concerned about their health, and some of them are frequently hospitalized.

The omimai system began in December 1982, and has been held every three months. The member of the Committee on Medical Care Problems visits the Administration Office to check on who are hospitalized. Then, the Executive Committee asks either the representatives of the building to which the hospitalized resident resides or particular friends of the sick resident to make an omimai visit. The visiting members take flowers worth \$2.

For Americans, these three measures may seem trivial or insignificant. But for the Executive Committee and the residents of Fuji-no-sato, they were very significant because they were the first steps toward forming a purpose for the Association. It is also important to emphasize that these measures became possible only after the election of a strong President, Mr. Sonoda.

5. The Association's Activities vis-a-vis the Management

The most important activity of the Residents Association is to represent the interests of the residents to the management, and this became very evident during the 1982-1983 term. The fact that all standing committees are

set up to deal with specific problems of the residents (medical care, meals, and environment) and that there are no committees for social functions (such as the Welcome Committees for the new residents one finds in American retirement communities) signifies this point.

When there is a problem from the residents, the President or Vice President and the Chairman of the appropriate standing Committee meet the director. The meetings are held ad hoc, not on a regular basis. Under the leadership of Mr. Sonoda, the Executive Committee made it a rule to make requests of the director in written form, and to have a written reply from him or the executive staff at the head office when it was appropriate. The members of the Executive Committee thought they could keep these records as indisputable evidence of their agreements. Mr. Baba, the director, thought of this as a great nuisance, but he had no choice but to conform to the Association's request, since the Association was the formal representative of the residents.

However, the Executive Committee was unable to settle conflicting requests from the residents; it simply passed all requests to the director. Not surprisingly, sometimes strange things happened. For instance, a representative brought a request from one resident in her building to cut some trees down to allow more sunlight. There were similar requests from the residents in three other buildings. The President and the Chairman on the Committee on Environment

met the director and informed him of this request. Mr. Baba directed his maintenance staff to cut the main boughs (not the trees because that was prohibited) near the buildings from which the requests had been made. The following month, representatives in these buildings brought protests from other residents about cutting the boughs, and demanding protection of the natural environment. Without making any effort to settle the protests, the Executive Committee passed them to the director. Mr. Baba was dismayed and asked the President to unify future requests in order to avoid this sort of confusion.

Another example: The Executive Committee once informed Mr. Baba of a complaint that the women's hot spring bath room had too many faucets, and that some of them should be removed. The director asked his staff to do so. When the opposite request came in, Mr. Baba again asked the Executive Committee not to make conflicting requests, but nonetheless made his staff restore the removed faucets. To Mr. Baba and some of his staff, it seemed that whatever they did in responding to the claims, complaints, and requests, they always met criticisms rather than gratitude. They had no choice but to comply or risk being accused of neglecting the residents.

Obviously the Executive Committee was unwilling to take the role of mediator. The mediating work would make it necessary or inevitable for Committee members to confront some residents in achieving consensus on the issues.

However, there is a very strong emphasis not only among the leaders but among the residents as a whole, on avoiding any kind of conflict, even in simple matters like the adjustment of different opinions. Disagreement on the tiniest issue, if made public, tends to be interpreted in a personal way. Accordingly, the residents are very careful not to challenge others' views even if they do not agree with them; rather, they maintain a non-committal attitude, not supporting the views of the others but at the same time withholding their own views. To the leaders and the residents, group harmony seems to mean the absence of open conflict among themselves rather than something that they should actively seek. Furthermore, given the negative relationship with the management, even the leaders of the Executive Committee avoided the mediating work because such work involved the risk of being taken as siding with the management. It was self-protective for the leaders to simply pass all kinds of claims, complaints and requests to the director.

Quite expectedly, the leaders of the Executive Committee are incapable of resolving conflict among the residents, nor do the residents expect them to take such a role. Conflicts among the residents are always brought to the director.

Why, then, are the leaders unwilling and incapable of taking the role of mediator? Why are the residents as a whole sensitive to possible conflicts among themselves to such an extreme extent? Earlier I pointed out that very few

residents are interested in becoming representatives in the Association. The key to answering these questions is to ask: what kind of place do the residents think Fuji-no-sato is? In the previous chapter, I argued that the residents viewed themselves as the clients of devoted "welfare" workers. They think Fuji-no-sato is a place where they are entitled to receive warm-hearted services from the staff. In short, it is a "client" model, the staff being the service-providers and the residents the recipients. There seems to be no doubt among the residents that the clients need not take the role of mediator, since any problems arising at Fuji-no-sato are to be handled not by them but by the director and his staff. They can remain passive recipients of the services offered by the staff.

It would be quite a different story if the staff could not provide many services and the residents had to actively engage in an important part of the operation of the community--that is, if the client model were meaningless and a more active model had to be sought by the residents. Whether or not the residents would like a more active involvement in the operation is a different question. What is important about the Association's role vis-a-vis the social integration of the residents is the fact that the residents at Fuji-no-sato were financially able to buy the right to receive necessary services in effect at the expense of possible roles which otherwise would have been available for them. This may be a common problem in the social

integration in any middle or upper class retirement community, not only in Japan but also in the United States.

In sharp contrast with the unwillingness and incapability of the leaders of the Executive Committee to take the mediating role for the residents, they demonstrate their skills in high level negotiations with the management, the interactional skills that they have acquired throughout their careers. This was most vividly observed in a series of negotiation over the proposed increase of the monthly fee during the period of June to September 1983. The whole process will be described in detail because it will illustrate how lively the men could be if they had an opportunity to use their old skills, an opportunity that is very rare at Fuji-no-sato. Furthermore, during the negotiations, the management took the initiative to improve its unsatisfactory relationship with the Residents Association.

In June 1983, the management proposed a 20% increase of the monthly fee for the first time. While the contract indicates that the monthly fee may be raised or at least reevaluated every two years, the success of Fuji-no-sato had made it possible for the management to hold the initial fee for nearly four years despite inflation and the increase of the staff size. The proposal was made at the annual meeting for disclosure of the accounts of the previous fiscal year. It is stated in the entrance contract that the fiscal operation of the community must be disclosed to the

residents within three months of the end of the fiscal year. Since the fiscal year ends in March in Japan, it has become a custom that the disclosure is held in June--it usually takes two to three months for the staff to prepare for it.

About two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting, the management distributed the detailed materials on expenditures in the previous year, and on the new budget, along with a letter of explanation for the increase, to each resident.

Of course, a new leadership group had been formed, and the most influential leaders of the previous term had retired. However, the leadership was too new and the issue was too large. The new President consulted other leaders on the Executive Committee as well as his predecessor, and came to the conclusion that a special committee should be set up. He obtained support from the Executive Committee. Accordingly, in mid-June, about a week before the scheduled disclosure meeting, an emergency general meeting of all residents was convened in order to have the formation of the special committee approved. The meeting was short and the special committee was granted the formal power to represent the interests of all members of the Association in its negotiations with the management. It was also approved that the members of the special committee should be hand-picked by the current President. The President already had candidates in mind, so he was quick to appoint the members; the President himself, Vice President, the Chief Treasurer,

and seven men from the previous year's leadership.

The ten-member committee met several times and discussed strategies for questioning the management at the disclosure meeting, and for negotiations thereafter.

In late June, the general meeting for the annual disclosure was held for two days at the large meeting room in the Community Center. It was scheduled for two days because of the proposed increase of the monthly fee, although it had always been completed in one day previously. The news of the formation of the special committee had been reported by the director to the head office in Tokyo. The head of the Planning Department took over the headship of the Management Department and represented the management.

The meeting on the first day began in an extremely tense atmosphere. The room was packed with concerned residents, about ninety of them, and some additional chairs were brought in to seat as many as possible. Those residents who did not get seats, and those who chose to stay in their apartments watched a telecast of the meeting through the community's cable T.V. system. The members of the special committee took seats in the front row, and other outspoken residents seated themselves near the microphone, their usual and favorite position at general meetings.

There was a sense of inevitability among the rank-and-file residents, the feeling that the monthly fee had to be raised. In fact, during the two weeks prior to the meeting, this was the main topic in residents' conversations. All

agreed that the increase should not be made, but if it could not be avoided, the increase should be kept to a minimum. They appeared to be waiting to see what concessions the special committee could get from the management.

At the outset of the meeting, the Vice President read a prepared statement as the official view of the Association, attacking the management in its lack of sincerity by citing the previous major problems. The meeting in the first day was concerned with the management's explanation of its fiscal operations in the previous fiscal year. It was a question-and-answer type meeting. The members on the special committee raised questions in turn as if they were following a planned strategy. It seemed to me that the committee members tried to discredit the management on its previous year's fiscal operations, in order to argue that the proposed budget would be smaller if the community were properly managed, thus arguing no need to increase the fee. This strategy did not succeed very well due to pointed answers by the management representative, and the session narrowed down the issues over which both the committee and the management could negotiate.

Meanwhile, while the members on the committee asked questions in a restrained manner, some outspoken residents who spoke up at the meeting expressed naked aggression, hostility and anger, some even by loudly shouting at the management representatives. Although their opinions were more or less ignored by both the committee members and the

management representatives, the tense atmosphere grew even stronger. As always, no women spoke at the meeting.

The tone of the questions even by the committee members was at times harsh and accusatory, which showed a remarkable contrast with the residents' self-protective, super sensitivity to conflicts with fellow residents. However, this was perfectly understandable because the management, including the director, was the only available target against which the residents could discharge whatever suppressed hostility they felt. This is, of course, a social psychological explanation, and this appears to be true since the residents including the silent women actually seemed to relish the tense atmosphere and harsh words, if not the shouting, as if they identified with the speaking residents and experienced their own catharsis. In this sense, the confrontation with the management was a necessary ritual for the residents as a whole.

In the evening of the first day, the head of the Departments of Planning and Management, who was the chief management representative, invited the members on the special committee for informal discussion. It was a shrewd but most appropriate next step because both sides were well aware that actual negotiations would have to be held in private. The invitation was meant to be a cue to the committee members that the management planned to conduct the negotiations in the traditional Japanese manner, and the cue was correctly received by the latter; in fact, this was the

first time that the management approached the leaders of the Association as equals, capable of conducting high level negotiations in the traditional way. Therefore, the invitation to an informal talk was welcomed by the committee and both sides got down to business right away; the informal meeting lasted more than three hours that evening.

The general meeting was resumed on the following day, but cut short half way through the schedule. At the end of the morning session, the President of the Residents Association made a motion that, since most of the residents' opinions had already been expressed, the meeting should be adjourned and further negotiations should be conducted by the special committee. The motion was approved. Since the framework of the negotiations had been established in the informal meeting the previous night, the management did not try to settle the issue, but took the position of listening to the residents' views as much as possible.

After the general meeting, five meetings were held between July and early September. Each time, management representatives came to Fuji-no-sato for the negotiations. After each session, the Association reported progress in the minutes posted on the Association's announcement board at the Community Center. It appeared obvious that the negotiations were being conducted according to the accepted "hostile" atmosphere. For instance, the language used in the Association's reports was very harsh and accusative of the management. However, an important change was taking

place in the actual negotiations. They had become highly task-oriented, without excessive emotion on either side. It was evident that the members of the special committee liked the management representative not only because he was highly capable of delicate negotiations, but also because he was trying to demonstrate sincerity to the committee by taking a formal but honest and frank attitude. Accordingly, neither side seemed bent on outmaneuvering the other. Despite their respective official positions, mutual trust was being restored among them through the successive negotiating sessions.

The negotiations were concluded in the middle of September in a dramatic but very traditional way, typical of high level negotiations in Japan. After the five meetings, it was virtually agreed that an increase of about 8% of the monthly fee was legitimate. But there remained some minor issues to be worked out--issues which I thought might have been left unsolved intentionally by the committee. A summit meeting was held to conclude the negotiations. Needless to say, the management side was represented by the management representative. But the question of who would represent the special committee was an extremely important one, because that person would have to be the real leader among the leaders. The person chosen was not the current President, who officially chaired the committee, nor was it the President from the previous year. It was the Vice President from the previous year. He represented all the power of the

special committee and thus of the residents as a whole. Indeed, it was typically Japanese that the representation of each negotiating side changes as the negotiations progress, from a group of negotiators eventually to one person on each side who are to settle the negotiation formally.

However, why the previous year's Vice President emerged as the leader of the committee members is not certain. As a matter of fact, I could not have predicted who it would be. I thought Mr. Sonoda, the President from the previous year, might represent the committee, mainly because he had demonstrated leadership as the President, in introducing new ideas for the Association's activities, and he gained the respect of the rank-and-file members. The management representative had also been unable to predict this choice. Perhaps it was because the former Vice President was the only member on the committee who had a part-time job as a senior business executive in a large corporation. Also important to note is the fact that he was one of the first members on the committee who evaluated the sincerity and capability of the management representative positively.

In sum, the series of negotiations between the management representative and the special committee produced highly significant outcomes, more important than the settlement of the fee increase itself. Most importantly, a pattern of representation for future negotiations had been established. Future problems would be dealt with differently; the head of the Departments of Planning and

Management had succeeded, as the management representative, in convincing the members on the committee of his sincere attitude and leadership ability, by letting them know that it will be he that they will negotiate with in the future. He told me after the formal settlement of the issue that his main objective had been to establish a sound framework within which the management could negotiate with the leaders among the residents creatively--that he had tried intentionally to convince the members of the committee of the sincerity of the management, and that the amount of the fee increase had been a secondary issue. Another important outcome was the fact that strong leadership had emerged among the residents in the process of the negotiations. When a new serious problem arises in the future, the Executive Committee of the Association will be able to mobilize a pool of leaders.

After the settlement of the issue, another emergency meeting of all residents was convened, and the committee reported the 8% increase of the monthly fee. It was approved by the attending residents without any objection. Apparently, the residents were glad that the committee had succeeded in lowering the increase rate from the proposed 20% down to 8%, viewing it as a victory over the management.

Chapter 10. Group and Individual Activities

Informal activities are an important function of peer groups. Since Fuji-no-sato is a kind of peer group community and there the residents' interpersonal relationships are seldom formally structured, it is essential for a study of social integration to discuss such questions as: (a) what kinds of informal activities are emerging; (b) how are the residents forming informal groups; (c) what are the patterns of participation in informal activities; and (d) what are the characteristics of interaction among the participants? It should be emphasized again that a setting such as Fuji-no-sato is very unusual in Japan, where interpersonal relations are usually vertically organized. Like the Japanese in general, the residents in this community have not been socialized to cultivate social relationships in a formally unstructured, purely peer group oriented setting.

With this in mind, I will discuss four types of informal activities at Fuji-no-sato: (1) hobby group activities, (2) Christian group activities, (3) volunteer group activity, and (4) gardening. While the first three are organized in groups, gardening is an unorganized individual activity. All emerged spontaneously, and they are important components of the residents' daily lives.

1. Hobby Group Activities

Formation of Hobby Groups

There is a pattern to the forming of hobby groups at Fuji-no-sato. The residents who plan to form a new hobby group simply post an announcement of its formation on the message board at the Community Center. They also consult with the staff about the availability of space and the schedule. The proposal is always made by more than one resident, and when an instructor is necessary, the founding residents have usually found him/her prior to the announcement. In order to join the group, interested residents simply show up at the meetings or talk with members. No group engages in active recruiting of new members. All hobby groups existed before I began field work. There was no group either newly formed or broken up during the course of the research.

The management passively encourages all informal group activities, and hobby group activities are the most common among the residents. That is, while the management makes every effort to provide accommodations for the activities, it does nothing else to facilitate them, and there is no activity coordinator on the staff.

General Characteristics of Hobby Groups

There are 23 hobby groups at Fuji-no-sato, and their characteristics are presented in Table 10-1 in terms of:

Table 10-1: 23 Hobby Groups at Fuji-no-sato
in terms of Four Characteristics

name of group	frequency	average participants	composition	need for instructor
Japanese chess	every day	10	men only	medium
Morning walking	every day	8	both	low
Croquet	every day	10	both	high
Knitting	twice a week	4	women only	low
Nagauta (traditional singing)	twice a week	6	women only	high
English	once a week	7	women only	high
koto (stringed instrument)	once a week	7	women only	high
Chorus	once a week	23	both	high
Record concert	once a week	10	both	medium
Discussion A	once a week	10	both	low
Reading sheet music	once a week	6	women only	medium
Discussion B	once a week	10	both	low
Yōkyoku A (traditional music)	once a week	5	women only	high
Yōkyoku B	once a week	4	women only	high
Tea ceremony	once a week	8	women only	high
Japanese calligraphy A	once a week	6	women only	high
Japanese calligraphy B	once a week	7	women only	high
Painting/drawing	twice a month	10	both	medium
Wood carving	twice a month	9	both	medium
Wood block printing	twice a month	10	both	medium
Haiku (poetry)	once a month	18	both	high
Doll making	once a month	6	women only	low
Golf	once a month	8	men only	medium

(1) the frequency of meetings, (b) the average number of participants, (c) membership composition, and (d) the need for an instructor.

With regard to frequency, a little over a half (12 out of 23) hold activities once a week. Three groups meet every day, three meet twice a month, and three once a month. And 2 groups meet twice a week, Thus, once a week is the usual frequency of activities.

The average number of the participants ranges from four people (in the knitting group and one of the yōkyoku group for traditional singing and music), to 23 people in the chorus, with the majority of the groups having around 10 people. The number of the participants in each group appears to be determined by (a) the group's popularity among the residents, (b) size of available rooms, and (c) the type of hobby--for yōkyoku, for instance, seven people would be the maximum for a team play. The second and third factors are the major reasons for the two yōkyoku groups and the Japanese calligraphy, respectively.

The membership composition is shown in three ways: men only, women only, and mixed. Only 2 groups are composed only of men: the Japanese chess (go and shōgi) group and the golf group, 11 groups are made up of only women, 10 of both men and women. As I will discuss the significance of the membership compositions shortly, let it suffice here to point out that women are more active in hobby groups than men.

The need for instructors is also shown in three ways based on my observational judgment; high, medium, and low. Eleven groups are ranked high, which means that the activities of these groups would be difficult without having instructors, and without recognition of the instructors as experts by the members. For instance, the croquet group has a male resident who is officially qualified as a referee in this sport, who not only acts as a referee but also coaches members. He is recognized by the members as the instructor of the group. Likewise, the instructor of English group has been a high school English teacher. Since the other members in this group are only beginners in English, the need for the instructor is high.

The availability of these "formal" instructors is usually a basis for the formation of the groups. Except for 2 groups, i.e., the chorus group and the haiku poetry group, for which the instructors come from the neighborhood, all instructors are residents of the community.

Seven groups are ranked medium in need for instructors. These are the groups which need some sort of instruction, but do not have formally recognized members as their instructors. Generally, some skillful or knowledgeable members in each group act as ad hoc instructors as needed. This happens in two ways. First, this happens when the activity is not a type which requires very skilled instructors. In the record concert group, a few members who are particularly knowledgeable about classical music give

short explanations, but the group sometimes engages in this activity without such members. Second, when the level of technique among several members is high. The wood carving group has some skillful members whose technical abilities are almost indistinguishable from one another. Any skillful member can give advice to the beginners, and they also exchange advice among themselves.

Five groups have low need for an instructor. For instance, the group of morning walkers simply meet at six o'clock in the morning and take a walk together around the community for about one hour.

In addition to these characteristics shown in the Table, two other characteristics of the hobby group activities should be mentioned. First, there are many traditional hobbies--Japanese chess, nagauta, koto, yōkyoku, tea ceremony, Japanese calligraphy, and haiku. This characteristic seems to support a stereotypical view that in Japan old people enjoy traditional hobbies. Second, most participants in hobby groups have pursued their hobbies for a long time, and some of them are semi-professional. This is particularly true among female participants in traditional arts. At least, all the instructors in these groups have official certificates as high level instructors. Instructors or otherwise, all these women started taking lessons when young, which in turn testifies their relatively well-off social background, because it was typical in upper middle class families to give daughters lessons in

traditional arts.

There are two occasions each year when the participants in hobby groups demonstrate their activities or exhibit their works; on the anniversary festival held on May 15th commemorating the opening of the community and the community festival on Respect the Elders Day, September 15th, a national holiday. Activity groups such as chorus, nagauta, yōkyoku, and tea ceremony hold demonstrations at various rooms in the Community Center, while craft groups exhibit their works such as sweaters, wood carving, wood block printing, drawing, Japanese calligraphy works, and so on in the craft room.

Patterns of Participation

Of 121 residents for whom interviews were completed, overall 71 (58.7%) belonged to at least one hobby group. Among 40 men, 27 (67.5%) had at least one membership, whereas 13 (32.5%) had none at all. Similarly, among 81 women, 44 (54.3%) belonged to at least one group, and 37 (45.7%) none. Thus, in simple proportion men appear to be slightly more active than women in participation. As I will discuss shortly, however, men's and women's patterns of participation are distinctly different.

Meanwhile, Table 10-2 illustrates the number of hobby groups men and women belonged to. No residents had more than seven memberships.

Table 10-2: Number of Hobby Groups Men
and Women Belong to.

number of groups	sex	
	men	women
1	8 (29.7%)	21 (47.7%)
2	5 (18.5%)	11 (25.0%)
3	5 (18.5%)	7 (15.9%)
4	5 (18.5%)	4 (9.1%)
5	2 (7.4%)	0 (—)
6	1 (3.7%)	0 (—)
7	1 (3.7%)	1 (2.3%)
Total	27 (100%)	44 (100%)
mean	2.8	2.0

Among men, the number of memberships that each held clustered in the range of 1 to 4 groups, with a mean of 2.8 groups. In contrast, nearly half of the women had only one membership, but with a mean of 2.0 groups. In terms of individual participation, it appears that men are more active than women.

It is important to find out why some residents did not join any hobby group. Thirteen out of 40 men (32.5%) and 37 out of 81 women (45.7%) belonged to none at all. These non-participants were asked to give the main reason for this, and the following is the result.

The men's reasons are categorized into six groups. Four men mentioned declining health, and another four men said that they rather enjoyed personal freedom. Three said that they were not good at interpersonal associations. One man mentioned that he had no particular reason, one said that there was no group he was interested in, and one said that he had to take care of his dependent wife. In other words, non-participation was a situational necessity for the 5 out of 13 men whose reasons were either declining health or care of a wife.

The reasons given by 37 non-participant women are divided into seven categories. Nine said that they felt interpersonal relations in hobby groups were annoying, and another nine mentioned that they preferred personal freedom to group participation. Eight women said that since they were not yet completely settled down in the community and

they could not regularly attend, they felt their participation could disturb the group activities (meiwaku ni narukara). Seven women mentioned their declining health, two mentioned that they had to take care of their dependent husbands, and one said she had been indirectly refused membership. Lastly, one said she was still studying which group to join. Thus, 9 out of 37 women (24.3%), those women who mentioned either declining health or care of dependent husbands, had situational reasons for their non-participation.

Five points should be emphasized about these results. First, the unavailability of interesting hobby groups is not the main reason at all. Only one man said there was no hobby group he was interested in. Second, refusal to grant membership is exceptional, too. Only one woman said that she had been refused membership. In her case, when she asked a member of the group in question about her possible participation, she was told indirectly that the instructor of the group was not very eager to have more members. Third, external reasons such as declining health and taking care of dependent spouses are important reasons for both men and women, an understandable finding considering the advanced age of some residents. Fourth, many men and women stressed the fact that they enjoyed personal freedom more than participation in the groups, and this characteristic appears to be related to their life styles. Fifth, a significant number of men and women seem to feel

uncomfortable or shy in interpersonal relations. Men used the expression that they were not good at mutual association, while women said they felt the interpersonal relationships in the groups were annoying. Clearly, they were emphasizing the costs rather than the benefits of participation.

Although one may think that the fourth and fifth characteristics are opposite sides of the same coin, my impression at the interviews suggests otherwise. Those men and women who stressed personal freedom spontaneously used the same word jiyuu, freedom, to explain their non-participation, and in my judgment, they meant what they said. Put another way, they appear to have emphasized the perceived benefits rather than the costs of their non-participation in hobby groups.

Interactional Characteristics

Three general characteristics are discussed in this section with regard to social interactions in hobby group activities. These three are interrelated to one another, but they are dealt with separately for heuristic purposes.

(1) Although all 23 hobby groups are organized in groups, participation in the activities is highly individualistic as opposed to group oriented. There is a strong tendency against attention to the group as opposed to individual members, and this tends to be true even in groups which have a high need for instructors. For example, the

koto group had to be completely reorganized after its initial members quit in a body, protesting the instructor's insensitivity to individual needs. The instructor is a semi-professional player and tried to have her original compositions played by the members. She assigned each member a specific part and gave them intensive lessons. This was apparently much more than the members wished to do; they simply wanted to play koto as a "light" hobby. Since the instructor did not change her view, the members decided to quit the group altogether.

(2) Many participants in hobby activities seem to regard their relationships as instrumental ones. This is evidenced in the following incident. The wood block printing group used to have an instructor. Like other groups which have recognized instructors, the members of this group gave him a small gift twice a year, summer and winter, following the Japanese custom of seasonal gift exchange. However, during the course of my research, it became evident that many of the members had become as skillful as this instructor in wood block printing; thus I ranked the need of instructor of this group as medium. In late fall, 1982, some members met and discussed whether they should give him a gift as usual now that there was virtually no difference in their technique from his. To them, gifts are the token of their appreciation of the instructor's technical assistance. In the end, they decided to discontinue the custom, and did so without giving any

explanation to the instructor. But it was obvious to the latter why he did not get a gift, both sides recognizing that he was no longer regarded as the group's instructor.

(3) Gender difference in participation. Here and in the next chapter I will introduce two key concepts for the analysis of social interaction among the residents. One is "purpose specificity," and the other is the "additional significance" of purpose-specific interaction. Purpose-specific interaction means a specific kind of social interaction which is supposed to occur at a particular place or due to a shared purpose. As I will discuss in the next chapter, a room which is used for a specified hobby group activity is a purpose-specific place. Or broadly, any social interaction based on formal roles is a kind of purpose-specific interaction because what is expected of each person is clearly recognized. In the context of our discussion here, this notion denotes various hobby activities themselves. "Additional significance" means the development of interpersonal relationships that stem from purpose-specific interactions. For instance, a woman in the tea ceremony group participates in the group's activity, and interactions in this group are a kind of purpose-specific interactions. However, as she engages in the activity, she may be able to cultivate a sort of intimacy with other members, whom she generally perceives as her "friends." This development is referred to as an additional significance.

These two notions are highly useful in analyzing the patterns of social interaction among the residents in general, and gender difference in hobby group participation in particular. To state the conclusion first, although the objective data showed that more men participated in groups, and the participating men belonged to more groups on the average than women, the men's style of participation is highly purpose-specific, whereas that of the women's style tends to generate more additional significance.

As pointed out earlier, hobby groups are of three memberships types: men only, women only, and mixed. Let me describe the interactional characteristics of each of the three types. Two groups are made up of men only, namely the Japanese chess group and the golf group. Here I will describe typical interactions in the chess group, as I discuss the golf group in the section on friendship activities in the next chapter. (The golf group is the best example of male friendship at Fuji-no-sato.) Interaction among the members of the chess group is typical of pure purpose-specific interaction, and has virtually no additional significance. This group meets every day, and ten persons or so at any given meeting. The members simply come to the room, find partners, play a game or two, perhaps watch others play for a while, and leave the room. In both kinds of Japanese chess, go and shōgi, a game is played by only two persons, and both players remain silent most of the time, concentrating on thinking. Spectators also remain

silent in order not to disturb the players. Conversations are rare and usually about the strategies of games. Thus, the interactions are best characterized as purpose-specific. Furthermore, although the members could have planned tournaments to enjoy the games in a more organized way, (a common practice outside the community), this has never happened. There is no member willing to plan and organize such tournaments.

There are 10 groups composed of both men and women. In these groups the activities are purpose-specific also. This is true of both heterosexual interactions and men's mutual interactions, although women in these groups form small circles among themselves, which continue to associate outside the group activities.

The possibility of generating additional significance is most likely found in the 11 women-only groups, and particularly in small groups whose membership has been stable. In these groups, after a few years' activities, incompatible members have been in effect filtered out, and regular interaction over these years has generated intimate sentiments among the members. The yōkyoku A group is a good example of this. It has only five members all of whom were original members, and it is headed by an instructor who used to teach this traditional art professionally. All members comment positively about both the instructor and the other members. They occasionally eat out together and hold gatherings such as a year-end party at an outside

restaurant.

It is important to clarify the extent to which men and women at Fuji-no-sato are hobby-oriented in comparison with other old people in Japan, especially those of a similar social class. However, it is difficult to answer this question because I am not aware (and I suspect there is no reliable study on the issue yet) of any relevant studies among the Japanese elderly in general or among the residents of other retirement communities in Japan. Yet it is my impression that both men and women at Fuji-no-sato are highly hobby-oriented for the Japanese elderly. There are four reasons for this judgment. First, although men's hobby group interaction itself is purpose-specific, many are very active. Perhaps men enjoy hobby activities but are either unwilling or incapable, or both, of generating additional significance in their relationships. The significance of the men's hobby orientations will be further clarified shortly when I discuss Japanese cultural attitudes toward leisure activities. Second, while men appeared to be proportionally more active in hobby groups than women, there are more women than men who engage in hobby group activities, and I think the women are quite hobby-oriented. Third, both men and women practice hobbies that they have enjoyed throughout their adult years. This is more true among the women, but even the men have had their hobbies while they were working. Lastly, hobby orientation is discernable among non-participants of organized hobby

groups, although this seems far more characteristic among the women than the men. The non-member women are engaged in various correspondence courses such as Japanese classics, history, or tanka poetry. Generally, the residents at Fuji-no-sato are very well educated, intellectual people who tend to have some sort of hobby regardless of participation in the groups.

In order to understand the significance of hobby orientation among the residents at this community, it is necessary to discuss Japanese cultural attitudes toward leisure activities. In America, leisure activity is culturally valued as such, a value which is sometimes called the "fun morality" (Henry, 1963). Furthermore,, activity per se, leisure or otherwise, has cultural support in America. Thus the healthy elderly are expected to be active, and the kind of activity they can engage in is very likely to be leisure. This is the fundamental assumption of so-called "activity theory" in social gerontology. Many American retirement communities advertise "an active way of life" in order to attract the elderly.

In contrast, all Japanese retirement communities, including Fuji-no-sato, emphasize medical and nursing care rather than an active way of life in their advertisements. The fun morality simply does not hold for the Japanese, and this is especially true for the current elderly as opposed to younger generations. Throughout their lives, it has been the "work morality" that was the strong prescribed value.

In view of this Japanese cultural attitude toward leisure activity, the residents' apparent hobby-orientedness means they must enjoy their leisure activities a great deal.

2. Christian Groups

There is a significant number of Christians at Fuji-no-sato. The interviews identified at least 49 baptized Christians (11 men and 38 women), and there may be more Christians among those who were not interviewed. In addition, there are some residents who, although not baptized, are sympathetic with Christianity. The existence of these formal and informal Christians is in part due to the fact that while the managing organization of the community has no religious basis, it is an outgrowth of one of the country's largest non-profit social welfare organizations, which happens to be Christian. In fact, the parent organization's president is a very famous charismatic Christian in Japan, and he is also the president of the board of directors of the managing organization. Thus, those Christian residents who knew him appeared to trust him, and to thereby judge Fuji-no-sato as a reliable retirement community.

Another important characteristic about the Christians is that many of them have been believers all their lives. This has a special meaning in Japan, particularly for the generation of the residents, because it tells us that they

are originally from intellectual, upper middle class family backgrounds. In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries as Japan was undergoing modernization, Christianity first spread among the socially privileged, intellectual class. Thus, the Christian residents at Fuji-no-sato are some of the earliest Christians in modern Japan.

There are 5 groups organized by Christians: a morning prayer group, a discussion group, a hymn group, a sermon group, and a Bible study group. The morning prayer group meets every Monday morning and is attended by about 15 residents. The meeting is chaired by an 83 year old retired minister. This person chairs a small discussion group on every Saturday in which about 6 people participate regularly. Although this group is meant to be a free discussion group, the retired minister usually talks much of the time, as if he is giving a sermon. The group of hymn singers is the only group which is headed by an informal Christian and this is the most "secular" group of all; it has many informal Christians and even some non-Christians who simply like the hymns. About 18 residents gather every Sunday. The group of sermon listeners is the largest, about 23 people who meet three times a month to listen to tapes of famous sermons. Lastly, the Bible study group of about 20 residents holds meetings twice a month. The minister of a church in the nearby city comes to Fuji-no-sato to chair the meetings.

All 5 groups are open to all residents, but their regular members are Christians, except for the group of hymn singers. However, not all the Christians, baptized or otherwise, are regular members in these group activities. In fact, there exists a great deal of membership overlap in the five groups, and a significant number of Christians belong to none of them.

Three organizers have acquired recognition as leaders at least among Christians. First, the one retired minister. He is the only resident who had been the minister. As such he is greatly respected by other Christians. However, his old age (83 years old) and declining health restrict him from exercising his leadership actively; he is seen as a symbolic leader. Second, the leader of the sermon group is Mr. Sonoda, who was the President of the Residents Association in 1982-1983. As discussed in the previous chapter, he demonstrated his political leadership in that office. His modest, mellow character is favorably accepted not only by the Christians but by the residents in general. The third leader is a woman who organized the Bible study group. She also organized the only volunteer service group at Fuji-no-sato, which will be described in the next section.

Individualism and purpose-specificity characterize social interactions among the participants in the Christian groups. They come to scheduled meetings, engage in scheduled activities, and depart when they are over. There

is no active soliciting or efforts to invite non-Christian residents, and no joint activities outside the scheduled ones. As will be shown in the next chapter, the mere fact of being a Christian does not create very strong interpersonal bonds.

3. A Volunteer Service Group

There is only one volunteer service group at the community. In Chapter 6, I mentioned that within the estate of Fuji-no-sato there is a 50 bed Toku-Yō home (public long-term care facility) which is operated by a separate Christian welfare organization. The female Christian leader mentioned earlier organized a group of women to provide volunteer services for this facility.

However, this group is very loosely organized. The leader simply assigns three or four women to visit the home each weekday except Sunday. Thus, there are six small groups, but they never meet jointly. While the volunteer group was organized by the Christian leader, its participants are not necessarily Christians. Whoever wants to participate can contact the leader, who in turn assigns her to an appropriate day. No participant serves more than one day a week.

The type of volunteer service is clearly fixed. They fold and put in order the laundry at the Toku-Yō home, apparently at the request of the director of the home.

Usually, the participants meet together in the community and walk together to the home, where they work for two to three hours in the afternoon.

Their interaction has relatively low purpose-specificity; they can talk informally and exchange information about the community while working. Doing the same thing with the same people on a regular basis appears to help them not only structure their lives but also cultivate friendly relations. This may be true for the participants in hobby groups, but it seems more applicable for this group for two reasons: first, because of the low purpose-specificity, each participant in the volunteer service can observe the other participants' personalities easily through informal conversation. Besides, it is a very small group.

More importantly, however, this is the only group whose participants regard their activity as a kind of "work." They call it oshime tatami which literally means folding and putting away diapers. It is important to note that these women chose the word "diaper" despite the fact that the laundry at the Toku-Yō home includes not only diapers but also linens, clothes, towels, and other things. It seems that the word "diaper" has symbolic meaning for them, because a diaper symbolizes the work of care taking, the culturally prescribed work of women. While the work of care taking generally refers to motherhood, it does include the care for dependent aged parents as is found in the

traditional dōkyo arrangement. Therefore, by calling the activity diaper-folding, these women can locate the activity perceptually within their familiar framework of "work" and give it symbolic significance. Furthermore, this perception is reinforced by two additional factors: (1) they think that unlike leisure activities, this service is a helping and thus productive activity; and (2) they draw a perceptual line between themselves and the aged in the home. As one woman said, "We are helping kawaisōna (poor and disadvantaged) old people."

This volunteer group is a good example of the observation that when appropriate opportunities are available, the residents at Fuji-no-sato eagerly participate in them and ascribe positive meanings to their engagement in them. The problem in this community is that such opportunities are extremely few. This particular group is successful because it was relatively easily organized and the type of activity is familiar to the participants. Yet if the staff could help to find opportunities for such activities, and to organize the interested residents, they would eventually develop other such meaningful activities. Indeed, the residents at Fuji-no-sato are an enormous human resource; they have varied expertise, techniques and experience that they can provide or teach to other people.

4. Gardening

Gardening is the most important individual activity at Fuji-no-sato. The physical effort, time, expense and interest that many residents have poured into gardening are remarkable. Today almost every available space in the community is developed into a garden, neatly demarcated by volcanic rocks.

Background

Except for a "public" garden by the Community Center, all gardens have been developed by the residents themselves. Gardening was the first spontaneous common activity among the residents. Within a month or so after the community's opening, some early residents began making gardens. As these early settlers testify in story after story, this was enjoyable but physically hard work for them. Because of the volcanic origin of the area, the soil is very rocky. The residents started by removing the small rocks in order to make space for gardens. Naturally it was a very laborious work. They recall nostalgically those early days of Fuji-no-sato. They were enjoying the fresh excitement of their new environment, and neighbors came out and helped each other. In fact many of them first met and got to know their neighbors through this collaborative work.

Once the rocks were removed, the residents bought soil and fertilizers at the store in the Community Center. Since

there had been virtually no soil in the beginning, the total amount of soil they bought was quite enormous. Some residents hired professional gardeners to design the planting.

Initially, gardening space was claimed on a first come, first serve basis. Thus early residents occupied the best spots for their gardening space in their neighborhoods. By the end of the second year nearly all available places were developed. Although these gardens were emotional and financial investments for the early residents, a pattern emerged of allocating some garden space for new residents.

Gardens represent the residents' taste in plants. Some residents have only trees in their gardens, others prefer less colorful wild plants, but the vast majority like to plant colorful flowers in such a way that their gardens are rarely without blooms. It is very rare that they plant vegetables. Instead of buying young plants from stores, many residents order the seeds through the mail, let them grow into seedlings (usually in their rooms), and then plant them in the gardens. For this, the residents have to acquire some knowledge and technique. The most important part is planning: what kind of flowers should be planted in which seasonal order, and what kind of care will they need?

Women are more active than men in gardening. Among married couples, it is generally wives who are in charge of gardening while their husbands sometimes help with heavy work. There is also a tendency toward scaling down one's

engagement in gardening as one's health declines, either by planting relatively carefree plants or trees, or by giving up gardening and passing the space to someone else. It requires meticulous care and constant attention to grow particular kinds of flowers.

The Three Significances of Gardening

Gardening has three important meanings in the context of Fuji-no-sato. (1) It is the hobby of many residents. Even those residents who are not involved in gardening often mention that they like plants and gardening. In fact, the lush natural surroundings of Fuji-no-sato were one of the reasons that attracted many residents to this community in the first place. Gardening is also a hobby that one can engage in by oneself, and this seems to suit the individualistic life style of many residents.

(2) Gardening effectively compensates for one of the most serious problems in this community, namely the limited social stimuli and consequent boredom. Gardening provides constant change for the residents. Plants never stay the same, and their life cycle is usually short, often less than one year. Thus, the residents can observe the cycles of growth, peak, and withering, successively.

The constant changes of the plants means never-ending "work" for the residents. They feel responsibility for taking care of the plants. This becomes evident for many residents who grow colorful and beautiful flowers. The most

notable resident in this regard is Mr. Tsuruno, a 65 year old widower. Mr. Tsuruno is known both by the residents and the staff as Mr. Gardener of Fuji-no-sato. Dressed in work clothes, he works in his gardens every day. Not only has he the most extensive "private" gardens, but he was asked by the director to take care of the "public" gardens which are supposed to be managed by the maintenance staff. He also persuaded the director to build a small green house. Because of his role as Mr. Gardener, he can ask the staff to water the plants or to monitor the temperature in the green house when he is not available. Thus, for Mr. Tsuruno, gardening is the work in the community. Although he complains that he has so much work to do, or that he cannot even go on a trip, there is no denying that he enjoys his work, and more importantly his recognized role as Mr. Gardener.

Gardening is also a form of competition for some female residents. They compete to produce flowering sooner than the plants' seasonal schedules. Mrs. Fujita, a 74 year old widow, is one of the most keenly interested residents in this competition. She orders the seeds by mail, germinates them at her room at certain time intervals, and plants the seedlings in her garden when it is seasonally too early to do so. If she is successful, she will have flowers sooner than other residents, and even if she fails in her attempt, she always has some "reserve" seedlings in her room. Like other residents involved in the competition, she never

expresses her competitiveness openly or verbally, but it is obvious at least to those interested in gardening that her success will be recognized. For other gardeners know the seasonal timing of various flowers. Needless to say, gardens are a highly visible area for the competition.

(3) Active gardening may be in part due to some interactional problems at Fuji-no-sato. As I will discuss them in the next chapter, let it suffice here to point out that: (a) social interactions at Fuji-no-sato are shallow and tend to remain formal; (b) gossip is a major problem for women; and (c) men maintain formal distance and have little knowledge of one another's backgrounds.

Thus, gardening is a "safe" activity for the residents. Through mutual interest in it, they have a common topic of conversation and interaction. They can exchange their knowledge and techniques, and trade young plants.

More importantly, however, gardening appears to be a sanctuary for many residents, particularly women. Formal interpersonal relationships and gossip make their daily lives at the community stifling and tiring, but they can feel at ease and be themselves when they are engaged in gardening. Indeed, when they were asked what they liked most about gardening, many residents said that they liked the activity because the plants responded in a shōjiki way to what they did to them. Shōjiki means "honest," "upright," or "straightforward," generally referring to human character. In this context, it means that unlike

interpersonal relationships at Fuji-no-sato where one's genuine intentions are often misunderstood by others, the plants are very faithful, for better or worse, to whatever one does to them. The plants are "straight" to one's intentions and skill, thereby giving one a sense of control. In interpersonal relations this is not so, making social life tiring for the residents. I believe that this interpretation is generally true for Japanese interpersonal relationships, but it is particularly true of Fuji-no-sato, as the next chapter shows.

Chapter 11. Patterns of Social Interaction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss patterns of social interaction among the residents at Fuji-no-sato in terms of five aspects: (1) general characteristics; (2) key behavioral norms; (3) problems of controlling social interaction; (4) the socialization process of new residents; and (5) friendship activities. Also, I will discuss these five aspects with direct reference to the analytical model of this study which was presented in Chapter 2, the developmental model of the depth of interpersonal relationships among the residents. I intend to analyze the extent and kind of patterning of social interaction at Fuji-no-sato.

1. General Characteristics

Social interaction among the residents has three general characteristics, namely (1) limited interactional settings, (2) shallow social interactions, and (3) distinct gender differences.

Limited Interactional Settings

First, I would like to define some important concepts for our discussion. I will use the term "encounter" to denote the mere fact of a resident encountering other residents, and the term "social interaction" to mean the

kind of mutual interaction among the residents that develops from encounters. The need for this conceptual distinction will become clear shortly. In addition, I use the term "interactional setting" to mean the kind of physical space-- a room, an office, a corner of a building, a yard, a bench on the street, and so on--in which social interactions take place. The interactional settings are also differentiated into purpose-specific interactional settings and non-purpose-specific interactional settings. The former indicates places where specific kinds of social interactions are supposed to occur. For instance, when a group of residents meets in the craft room for wood carving, they do so first and foremost for the purpose of wood carving (at least in the beginning). In this sense, the craft room is a purpose-specific interactional setting. Or, when a resident visits the Clinic, he/she does so to receive the services of the Clinic. Thus, the Clinic, particularly its waiting room, is a purpose-specific interactional setting. Needless to say, through performing purpose-specific activities, the residents are very likely to develop further social interactions, especially with particular individuals, such as their friends. I call this "additional significance" of purpose-specific social interactions.

By "non-purpose-specific interaction setting," I mean such places as the front porch of the Community Center or the community's street itself, where social interactions tend to take place not because of the intended purpose of

the place but because of the greater occurrence of encounters.

These concepts may appear crude and simple, but they are useful for our purpose. Social interaction at Fuji-no-sato is severely limited because (a) purpose-specific interactional settings are relatively few, (b) interactions at such settings do not seem to generate additional significance very often, and (c) non-purpose-specific interactional settings are extremely limited. Each of these may be briefly discussed.

The purpose-specific interactional settings at Fuji-no-sato may be divided into two groups: settings for various group activities, and general settings for all residents. All group activities which are held indoors are held at various rooms in the Community Center. The croquet group has a small croquet course which is, of course, its interactional setting. For the group of early morning walkers, the route of the daily walk is considered as its interactional setting. For the golfers, the golf course and related sites (such as the cars they take to and from the course, or the site of play) are the interactional setting. It should be emphasized that social interaction at the settings for various group activities is limited to the members of each group, and confined to the scheduled period. Those residents who do not belong to any activity groups are excluded, and even the members of a group can only use the setting for the period scheduled by the staff. As will be

discussed shortly, there is virtually no place for further interaction inside Fuji-no-sato.

The purpose-specific interactional settings open to all residents are the dining hall, the hot spring bath, the waiting room of the Clinic, and the shop-office at the Community Center. These are the kinds of the purpose-specific interactional settings which tend to generate additional significance because the purpose itself does not usually dominate the interaction. For instance, one can have a meal while engaging in conversation about other things. At the risk of a slight exaggeration, it may be said that without opportunities to take part in some kind of purpose-specific interactional setting, a resident would have great difficulty even having a conversation with other residents. Indeed, some residents have at least one meal a day, usually dinner in the dining hall, in order to meet other residents and have a chat with them. However, this type of the purpose-specific interactional setting has limited significance because of its purpose-specificity and its short duration. A typical resident visits the Clinic once in two weeks (though some come more often), and the period of waiting is short. A resident takes a bath at most once a day; it may take at most one hour. Even at the dining hall, the time spent eating is shorter than the scheduled meal periods of one hour for breakfast, and one and a half hours for lunch and dinner. The exception is the shop-office in the Community Center which is open between

nine in the morning and five in the afternoon, with an hour lunch break. In addition to the longer hours, the residents have various purposes for going there--that is, its purpose-specificity is low. The residents may go there just to check their mail, buy some goods, make reports on maintenance problems, ask for certain services, make reservations for guest rooms or for meals, etc., etc.

Yet, perhaps the most important factor in limiting social interaction among the residents is the virtual absence of non-purpose-specific interactional settings. If they had been abundantly available, the residents would have been able to continue interactions begun at purpose-specific settings, and have more possibilities for additional significance. Furthermore, non-purpose-specific settings would function as centers of human flow, from which the residents could develop new relationships with one another. However, as I indicated earlier, this type of setting exists only at the front porch of the Community Center and on the street itself, mainly because many encounters occur there. But interaction at either place is usually brief, as the residents are generally on their way somewhere else, and they have to stand while talking.

The lack of non-purpose-specific interactional settings makes the life of the residents very stifling. Simply stated, there is virtually no place inside Fuji-no-sato where the residents can go without having some sort of purpose. Look at the building arrangement of Fuji-no-sato

again (p. 126). It is surrounded by deep woods, and most residents spend their days in the community. Even if they want to go outdoors, they can take a walk, an activity which may become boring with frequent repetition. They visit the shop-office at the Community Center several times a day at most without annoying the staff. Furthermore, visiting between residential units is not common at Fuji-no-sato--a fact which aggravates this situation. It is an irony that although there are many encounters inside the community, Fuji-no-sato does not have a mechanism to allow encounters to develop into meaningful interactions.

Shallow Social Interactions

Despite the limitations of the interactional settings, it should be possible for the residents to develop meaningful social interaction if they want to meet other residents. However, it seems that many residents do not want or expect to have active social interaction. For instance, when the residents talk about their relationships at Fuji-no-sato, many of them spontaneously use the same expression: "I don't want (or I don't have) deep interpersonal relations here." They always use "not deep" rather than saying "shallow" in describing their relations with other residents. This choice of adjectives seems important because it signifies that they are aware that deep interpersonal relations which, of course, belong to level one in the Japanese interpersonal model (Figure 2-1 in

Chapter 2) are the most desirable, but that they do not think they can develop such relationships at Fuji-no-sato. However, whether they had this negative expectation before they moved to the community, or whether it is the consequence of their own experience in the community is not certain. It seems to me that both may be true; they did not expect that they could develop level-one relationships with other residents when they came, and this expectation was confirmed as they actually went through various problems in interpersonal relations (which are discussed shortly).

Another expression often used by many residents, particularly the men, when they describe their interpersonal relations, is: "My relations with other people here are only tatemae relations." Tatemae is a unique Japanese concept which in this context means "formal." The opposite of tatemae is honne, which means one's true self or what one really has on his mind. Tatemae and honne form a pair. Tatemae relations with others are essentially formal relations, in which one must behave in a socially desirable way, even against his own will. It is characteristic of the outer edge of level two relationships; when the Japanese first enter formal role dominated relationships with others, they begin by presenting the tatemae self, because they do not know the others well. However, as they get to know one another well and their relationships acquire an intimate quality, they gradually feel that they can reveal their real, i.e., honne, self. The Japanese believe that honne

relations, which are characteristic of level one, are the ideal interpersonal relations. Put another way, the relationship between tatemae and honne interpersonal relations is parallel to the relationship between enryo and amae (see the discussion in Chapter 2).

For the residents at Fuji-no-sato, most of their interpersonal relationships are tatemae, and thus shallow relationships. Five reasons may be offered to explain this general characteristic. First, it seems they did not expect to develop level one, or honne, relationships. They often say that after having lived for sixty or seventy years separately, they have their own selves firmly built up and they cannot change them even though they see the need to do so. This view is further strengthened by the fact that they (especially men) had achieved high social status during their work careers. Another cause of this negative expectation is that for many residents, the move to Fuji-no-sato was the second or third choice; if they had had "a normal family," or dutiful children, they would not have come to Fuji-no-sato. It is obvious that for those without adult children, or those who never married, Fuji-no-sato was practically the only alternative. But residents who have children, particularly sons, are apt to feel that their coming to the community is seen as the result of some sort of family problem. Even without my asking, some residents were anxious to tell me that they had good family relations.

Second, it is not only natural but even wise for the residents to have shallow, formal relations with other residents in the context of Fuji-no-sato. Since they do not know one another well, this is the approach that the Japanese generally take. Furthermore, the cautious approach is safer at a place like Fuji-no-sato. It is a geographically isolated, small face-to-face community where the residents cannot avoid persons they do not like. This may also be true in American retirement communities, but it has particular significance in Japanese interpersonal relations. For the Japanese, a mistake in interpersonal relations is very difficult to correct, and in the context of Fuji-no-sato, it is almost irreversible.

Third, as I discussed in the previous section, there are very few interactional settings, purpose-specific or otherwise, so that there are few opportunities for the residents to get to know other residents well. Moreover, the residents cannot initiate and maintain interaction by playing formal roles since, as discussed in Chapter 9 and 10, the available roles are very limited.

Fourth, shallow social interactions may in part be the consequence of gossip and other problems of social control at Fuji-no-sato. I will discuss this point later.

Finally, the residents adopt a cautious, self-protective approach because they are not accustomed to congregate living. The vast majority of them lived in independent housing prior to their move to the community,

and very few had actually lived in apartment complexes or condominiums. They do not appear to have the necessary knowledge or skills to manage interactions in a small, newly constituted fact-to-face setting. Therefore, tatema is a means of imposing structure on a new, unfamiliar situation in which they have no clear guidelines for appropriate behavior.

Distinct Gender Differences

Thus far I have discussed the general characteristics of social interaction at Fuji-no-sato without mentioning gender differences, which are very distinct. Men maintain formal distance in their mutual interactions by exercising strong self-restraint whereas women are more active, both in the positive sense of friendship and informal group activities, and in the negative sense of gossiping. Heterosexual social interactions are few and mostly purpose-specific. Both men and women try to avoid interaction or even private company with the opposite sex, not only because they are not socialized for non-intimate, individual heterosexual interaction, but more importantly they (particularly women) fear gossip.

Social interactions among men are so limited that one gets the impression of complete atomization. They use polite but formal language, and the topics of their conversations are limited largely to broad political, economic, and social issues, or to the management of Fuji-

no-sato. "We respect one another" is an expression very often used by men when they talk about their interactions.

Social interactions among women are more active and visible than those among men, and probably due to the fact that women are socialized throughout their life course for informal social relations. Gossip and interpersonal problems are almost the monopoly women; men keep the distance to avoid them. These problems will be further discussed shortly.

2. Key Behavioral Norms

The perspective of behavioral norms is crucial for the analysis of social integration at Fuji-no-sato. Norms were defined in Chapter 2 to mean evaluative norms against which one's behavior is judged. Norms may be said to regulate and structure or to pattern social interaction. Rosow states:

The sheer presence of norms is a necessary, but not sufficient condition of effective socialization. While there can be little socialization without norms, the converse does not inevitably follow--that the existence of norms assures effective socialization. (Rosow, 1974, p. 71, original emphasis)

Since another aspect of socialization, namely the patterning of social interactions through role-playing, was dealt with in Chapters 9 and 10, the purpose of this section is to focus on the analysis of some key behavioral norms for the residents at Fuji-no-sato.

Before doing this, however, it may be helpful to recapitulate the theoretical discussion from Chapter 2. In American gerontology and particularly in Rosow's theory, the issue of norms becomes intrinsically important for understanding the social integration of the elderly in age-homogeneous residential settings. This is because, although the elderly in America tend to be alienated from the society's socialization mechanisms due to youth-oriented norms, the age in such settings could and can generate viable norms for themselves, relatively free from the influence of the dominant societal norms, primarily because of the seclusion of these living environments. In terms of social integration, whether or not the generated norms deviate from the dominant norms of the larger society is not an important theoretical question, but it is important that such norms have legitimacy among the elderly in the environment in question. In short, at least in the United States, the insulation of the aged with homogeneous backgrounds appears to foster the generation of legitimate but local norms which are necessary for the social integration of the aged.

I also discussed that while it was the youth-oriented norms that make socialization to old age intrinsically problematic in the United States, socialization to old age in Japan tends to become problematic for those who were outside the institution of the family. For the Japanese aged, norms and roles are mostly based on grandparenthood.

It is also true that compared with American society, Japanese society provides its members of all ages with age-specific or life-stage-specific general norms (a couple of examples, namely appearance and addressing, will be discussed shortly).

It is very important to emphasize here that such cultural norms for old people may be dysfunctional for social integration at Fuji-no-sato precisely because the residents are homogeneous in age and, as we have seen, in socio-economic background. Since Japan is a highly homogeneous society, this means that the homogeneity of the residents in this community is extremely high. What is, perhaps to Americans, particularly ironic is the fact that Japanese cultural norms for the elderly become meaningless for the residents at Fuji-no-sato, because these norms are based on intergenerational and family situations.

Furthermore, since Fuji-no-sato is very unusual in Japanese society in the sense that the residents are not related to one another through formal, institutional roles--occupational, communal or familial--and they were strangers when they came to the community, the kinds of norms that are available to them are highly limited. They are the norms which are most characteristic of the outer area of level two relations in our model.

In the following discussion, I will analyze the meanings of six key behavioral norms at Fuji-no-sato. Of course, these are not all the norms that govern behavior in

the community. There are various other norms, since social interaction itself is impossible without norms. However, these six norms are the core local norms for the residents, so important indeed that without understanding them, one cannot discuss patterns of social interaction at Fuji-no-sato. Six norms are: (1) "Don't Give Meiwaku to Others"; (2) "Exchange Greetings"; (3) "Maintain Proper Appearance"; (4) "Attend All Funerals"; (5) "Call Each Other by Name"; and (6) "Don't Ask About the Background of Other Residents."

"Don't Give 'Meiwaku' to Others"

By far the most important norm for the residents at Fuji-no-sato is: do not give meiwaku to others. Meiwaku is a word for which it is difficult to find an English equivalent. One Japanese-English dictionary lists "trouble," "annoyance," "bother," "nuisance," and "inconvenience" for meiwaku. This is a general norm in Japan or in any society for that matter, and its meaning is self-evident: don't cause trouble. Yet this norm has acquired special significance in the context of Fuji-no-sato, and I suspect that it has been the core principle throughout the lives of many residents.

The Japanese tend to view this general norm as a yardstick to evaluate their interpersonal relationships. That is, the perception of the extent of meiwaku in a given situation varies according to the perceived quality or depth of the involved interpersonal relationships. Thus, the

extent or even the definition of meiwaku is in fact negotiable. For instance, asking someone a favor may be perceived as giving him/her a great meiwaku if the person is in the outer area of level two, but the same request may not be perceived as meiwaku if the person is in level one. Similarly, the perception of meiwaku varies according to the objective magnitude of the favor: there are intolerable meiwaku even for one's level one people.

Generally speaking, however, the concern with giving meiwaku is characteristic of level two relationships. In a formal relationship where one cannot expect a high tolerance for meiwaku from the other, one has to correctly assess the allowable level of meiwaku. The Japanese often say, "Meiwaku o kakete sumimasen" ("I'm sorry that I gave you meiwaku"), when they are aware that the meiwaku should have been avoided if possible. It is also true that the Japanese do not like someone whom they regard as belonging to the level one area to be overconcerned with giving meiwaku, because they expect a higher tolerance of meiwaku among level one people, and overconcern is seen as too formal for the relationship ("mizu kusai").

As those who are familiar with Japanese culture and particularly with Doi's theory of amae may have already noticed, there is a great similarity between indulging in amae and giving meiwaku when the nature of meiwaku is to ask someone to do something for oneself. In this regard, "Meiwaku o kakete suminasen" is almost synonymous to "Gokōi

ni amae sasete itadakimasu" ("I will indulge myself in your kindness).

The point I am making now is this. The general norm (do not give meiwaku to others) is negotiable for the Japanese on the basis of their interpersonal relationships, but the fact that this norm has become by far the most significant norm for the residents at Fuji-no-sato indicates that the norm has highly effective adaptational value in this community. I hypothesize that the norm, which is only one of many general norms in Japanese society, has become the core norm at Fuji-no-sato because (1) the norm may have been the backbone of the adaptational strategies of the residents throughout their life course, and (2) there exists an internal necessity in the community to give it a high value. Before further discussing this point, let me present two examples which illustrate how this norm is observed by the residents.

Example 1: As discussed in Chapter 7, many residents spontaneously answered the question why they decided to come to Fuji-no-sato, saying that they came in order not to give meiwaku to their natural children, daughters-in-law, brothers/sisters, nephews/nieces, or other relatives, depending on their marital and familial situations. The perceived meaning and magnitude of meiwaku in this context differs also depending on marital and familial situation. For instance, some residents had the alternative of electing dōkyo, the traditional living arrangement with children.

For them, meiwaku appears to mean causing great inconvenience to the children's family especially through the notorious mother-in-law versus daughter-in-law relationship, and in the long run the burden of taking care of aged parents. Yet, for those without children, the magnitude of the meiwaku of a given act is understandably greater than the same act vis-a-vis children. Becoming dependent upon relatives other than children appears to be perceived as too much meiwaku to ask for. Whether their decision to move in was forced by circumstances or self-chosen, I think the residents generally have a very strong sense of control over their fate, a theme which is highly characteristic of the residents at Fuji-no-sato.

Example 2: A resident hobby group practicing Yōkyoku, traditional singing with a musical instrument called shamisen, decided against home practice after one of their members was told by her neighbor that the sound of the instrument was a bit too loud. This neighbor was known as a grouchy person. Yet when the member brought the issue up in a meeting, all agreed to stop practicing at home, without trying to ascertain how loud or annoying their own practice was to their respective neighbors. What interested me was the group's unquestioning assumption that their home practice caused meiwaku to their neighbors and that the neighbors had been enduring the noise. The members were very sensitive to giving meiwaku so that they took precautions against the possibility. The group used a room

at the Community Center only once a week and their residential units were the only other place where they could practice the instrument.

In general, the residents are very careful not to give the slightest meiwaku to other residents. They try not to ask favors, not to develop interpersonal conflicts, and not to disturb other residents with noise.

Here it is appropriate to discuss the issue of independence versus dependency in old age with regard to the meaning of this norm, which in turn, I believe, sheds new light on this favorite issue among American gerontologists. This issue becomes important in American society because while aging involves many forms of inevitable dependency, dependency is vehemently rejected by the society. I think many American researchers are attracted to study Japanese aging because of this cultural fact. They think Japanese society permits a greater level of dependency for its members in general, and for old people in particular. Consequently, they tend to overemphasize or even idealize dependency in old age in Japan.

However, independence and dependency are inseparable sides of one concept which is firmly rooted in the American value system. As Clark (1969) argues, in cross-cultural studies one must conceptually differentiate states of dependency from cultural values attached to them. Thus, in order to understand the meaning of dependency in old age in Japan, one must also specify both the types and the values

of independence in old age in Japan. Any attempt which does not take this theoretical approach is likely to project the American value on the state of dependency in Japan; Japan becomes a mysterious society where old people enjoy what the American elderly are denied.

It is correct to say that compared with American culture, Japanese culture allows mutual dependency. But this does not mean that the elderly in Japan actually think they should depend on their children. Quite the contrary, they feel that they should not become a burden on their children or anyone else. Dependency, to the Japanese elderly, is the consequence of various forces surrounding their lives, not something desired. The key to understanding this point is the location of the frame of reference. For Americans, one's frame of reference is always the self, culturally expected to be autonomous and independent. In contrast, the frame of reference for Japanese is the group, or to be more exact, the perceived quality of interpersonal relationships with others. The Japanese elderly think dependency on their children is acceptable not because one is entitled to it, but because, while dependency itself should be avoided if possible, the parent-child relationship is perceived in such a way that in a realistic sense, they can depend on their children, given that they strive to remain as independent as possible.

With this interpretation of old age dependency in Japan, let us now discuss what the norm (not to give meiwaku

to others) means for the residents at Fuji-no-sato. I pointed out that this norm is the most important norm for the residents, and clearly it is based on the Japanese frame of reference. What is crucially important for our discussion is this: due to the central role of this norm in their lives, the residents are actually able to attain a remarkable state of independence, which in turn signifies the fact that they do not have level one relationships at Fuji-no-sato. For the state of dependency tends to positively correlate with the quality of one's interpersonal relationships, and this is essentially what is meant by the term "mutual dependency." However, the residents attain a state of independence not because they value independence itself but because they believe they should not give meiwaku to others under the circumstances.

Moreover, if my interpretation is correct that this norm has been the backbone for the residents throughout their life course, they have been unusually independent and individualistic for Japanese. Whether this is a self-chosen life style or a forced one is not certain, although I believe that for those who have no children, or who never married, particularly women, it may have been a forced choice. Given that family life centered on bringing up children is the prototype of intimacy among the Japanese, the deprivation of this opportunity may have had profound influence over their life-long adaptational strategies. The residents' strong sense of control over own fate, the theme

underlying their social behavior, seems to support this interpretation. Needless to say, I am not arguing that this norm is the most important for all residents at Fuji-no-sato; there are apparently "dependent" widows who came very much against their will because they had no other alternative. But for the majority of the residents, the interpretation presented here appears to be reasonable.

"Exchange Greetings"

Exchanging greetings is another important norm for the residents at Fuji-no-sato. When they encounter one another, they exchange greetings. How they do it varies from a silent bow to a short conversation, and this will be discussed in the next section on the management of interactional distance. This is a general norm for the Japanese but it has acquired special significance at Fuji-no-sato.

Greeting is basic manners for the Japanese, and carries more importance for older generations than for younger ones. The social function of exchanging greetings appears to be the public recognition of normal mutual acquaintance. Each time people exchange greetings, they mutually recognize they are not strangers. The Japanese rarely exchange greetings with strangers.

For the residents at Fuji-no-sato, the greeting has the symbolic meaning of mutually recognizing their status of resident in this community. If Fuji-no-sato itself is seen

as a physical territory, the extent of the greeting signifies the relationship of people to its boundaries. The residents exchange greetings with each other but they usually do not do so with visiting strangers. When they are not sure whether the stranger is a part-time resident who seldom comes to the community or whether he/she is a potential resident, they just give a silent bow, the form of greeting which has the largest social distance.

It seems that the residents regard greeting as the very minimum etiquette they should perform as residents at Fuji-no-sato. They interpret the greeting as a demonstration that the greeting person has at least ordinary morality.

Therefore, "He/She doesn't even return a greeting" is one of the strongest criticisms that the residents make against other residents. For knowingly refusing to return a greeting is a public proclamation that that individual does not want to be regarded as a fellow resident by other residents, or at least that he/she does not want to bother with the greeting custom. However, for the rejected residents, it is a great personal disgrace; they definitely will not initiate a greeting when they encounter such a person again, and their relationship will be lost forever. The consequence of not returning greetings is so great that the residents have developed various ways of greeting that are so conspicuous that they cannot be misunderstood. The actual process of this will be discussed shortly.

It is interesting to note that many residents spontaneously use the expression "not even returning a greeting" when they criticize younger people, and more importantly when they talk about their negative relationships with their daughters-in-law. In the former case, the residents refer to the bad manners of young people in general, which in turn implies the symbolic meaning of greeting for the residents. In the latter case, the expression tends to denote a deep sense of rejection, and to rationalize the relationship by shifting the responsibility to the daughters-in-law, implying they do not have even the minimum moral character.

"Maintain Proper Appearance"

The residents of Fuji-no-sato take great care of their appearance. They wear clothes which are simple but of good quality. Their hair is well groomed, and a significant number of women also dye their hair. In addition, the women use cosmetics more frequently and more heavily than other Japanese women their age. This may seem quite natural for Americans, but it is not so for Japanese. Simply stated, the residents, particularly the women, do not very much look like the Japanese elderly.

Age norms regarding one's appearance are far more clear-cut in Japan than in the United States. Since appearance is women's business more than men's, the following discussion is mainly, though not exclusively,

about women. Two key evaluative words for proper social appearance among the Japanese are hade and jimi. Both hade and jimi are used not only about one's appearance but also about personality characteristics, life style, and so forth. But they are used here only in regard to one's appearance. Hade is used to describe people whose clothes are too showy, gay, colorful, or in general too youthful for one's age; whereas jimi means too sober, too subdued, or too old in appearance for one's age. The same difference is found in the use of cosmetics. Understandably, young women are more conscious about not becoming too jimi while older women pay attention to not becoming too hade. Although it is an interesting question how Japanese define and employ these contrasting concepts as they age, this is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Yet it should be pointed out that the Japanese who come to the United States, including myself, are generally astonished when they see elderly American women, because the bright colors of their clothes and the amount of make-up are much too hade by Japanese standards. If a Japanese elderly women were to appear like that, her sanity would be suspected!

It is important to note that the judgment of hade or jimi is not based on one's own preference in Japan but on one's perception of how she is seen by other women. This is because, as I have already pointed out, the frame of reference is not on the self among the Japanese. As a result, Japanese older women, say those over 70 years old,

tend to appear very jimi because they are not expected to appear hade, and it is safer for them to make their appearances a little too jimi in their own judgment.

In contrast, I think women at Fuji-no-sato appear more hade for their age, and they seem to enjoy this privilege. There is a kind of competition toward hade appearance within the range of generally perceived jimi. For if they appear too hade to other residents, they will certainly become targets of gossip. For instance, I often noticed many women wearing clothes which have muted bright colors, such as a soft pink. Bright pink is too strong for them, but a soft pinkish color is acceptable. I also often heard women say that at Fuji-no-sato they could wear clothes they had worn five or so years earlier, implying that those clothes which they were now "too old" to wear outside the community could be put on inside the community.

What, then, do the residents mean by the "proper appearance"? I think they mean appearance in public places. At Fuji-no-sato, any place but one's own residential unit becomes a public place in the sense that they are seen by other residents. Furthermore, because of their middle to upper middle class background, the residents had been careful of their appearance even before they moved to Fuji-no-sato, and this characteristic was reinforced by life in the community. Even so, they are relatively free from general judgments about hade-jimi, and appearance is one area where stratification among them is possible. They can

establish their own uniqueness or individuality vis-a-vis other residents of the same sex and there occurs a subtle competition for hade appearance. Indeed, as one woman said, "Jimi clothes sometimes make me depressed. When I'm in a gloomy mood, like on rainy days, I try to wear somewhat hade clothes and a bit stronger makeup. I don't think I could have this freedom if I were not living here."

"Attend All Funerals"

While the three norms thus far discussed are cases in which general norms from the larger society have gained additional significance at Fuji-no-sato, there are kinds of norm which are observed in much the same way as in the larger society, because of the magnitude of its moral force in both settings. One notable example is the attendance of funeral ceremonies of deceased residents.

Ordinarily funeral ceremonies are held at the large meeting room in the Community Center, and they are the best attended unplanned social gatherings. Nearly all residents attend each ceremony, wearing formal funeral clothes. Many of them said that it is natural for a resident of the same neighborhood to pay respect to the deceased person, regardless of their relationship with that person. Ever since the first funeral, the residents have spontaneously attended all funeral ceremonies in the ordinary way. However, there has been one modification of this norm, which is uniquely characteristic of Fuji-no-sato. In Japan, when

one attends a funeral, he/she gives kōden, a traditional monetary gift, to the family of the deceased (the amount of the kōden is determined according to one's previous relationship with the deceased). At first, the residents gave kōden when they attended funeral ceremonies in the ordinary way. However, this practice stopped soon after the director recommended against it; he said that generally the families of the deceased were not short of money and that the most important thing in attending the ceremony was to pay respect to the deceased person. Besides this modification, the ceremony is held in the ordinary Japanese manner, partly because a funeral is an important social event in general, and partly because the details of the ceremony are clearly fixed by custom. Moreover, by attending the ceremonies, the residents are able to anticipate how their own ceremonies will be held. Therefore, the residents were unhappy when the director instructed his staff to attend the ceremonies in plain work uniforms but with mourning bands on the sleeves. At first the director and the staff wore traditional formal clothes. The director also recommended that the residents dress informally, but this was strongly rejected by them. They feared that by making the funeral ceremony too routine and informal, the sense of respect for the deceased might be damaged.

"Call Each Other By Name"

This norm has emerged out of sheer necessity. In Japan, the elderly are socially called either ojii-san (grandfather) or obā-san (grandmother), both as terms of reference and as terms of address. This is another age/life-stage specific norm in Japanese culture. The Japanese socially use kinship terms irrespective of actual kin relations. For instance, a five year old boy vis-a-vis any two year old is socially called onii-san (elder brother). Or, a forty year old man vis-a-vis any younger person is called oji-san (uncle). The Japanese choose appropriate kin terms by looking at the person's age, sex, and likely kin status. However, not all kin terms are socially used; only the terms onii-san (elder brother), onē-san (elder sister), oji-san (uncle), oba-san (aunt), ojii-san (grandfather), or obā-san (grandmother). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to elaborate on this custom or to discuss how these kin terms are applied to the Japanese across their life course. Suffice it here to point out that in Japan, the aged are socially called either ojii-san or obā-san.

Since the residents at Fuji-no-sato are all either ojii-san or obā-san, it was necessary to call them by individual names from the beginning. Needless to say, this has been the administration's policy too. What I would like to emphasize are two important implications of this norm for the residents. First, the norm appears to have strengthened

the individuality of the residents. It was pointed out that most residents seem individualistic and independent for old people in Japan. The norm is in this sense compatible with the life-style of the residents.

Second, the norm appears to have significant implications for the self-concept of the residents. I mentioned that most residents spend their days mostly inside the community. Calling each other by individual names results in the fact that name rather than age may have become the core of their self-concept. Indeed, many residents often forget that they would be called either ojii-san or obā-san if they were not living in Fuji-no-sato. Ojii-san or obā-san may remind them of their old age and grandparenthood, but in daily life at Fuji-no-sato, the residents are free from this, because there are few social occasions in the community to use these quasi-kin terms.

At one time, I went with a female resident to a hospital in a nearby city. While we were in the waiting room, a nurse came toward us and said, "Obā-san, obā-san, come this way, please." For the nurse, this was a perfectly natural way of addressing her. But this resident told me later on our way back to Fuji-no-sato:

You know, Kinoshita-san, I was a bit surprised at the hospital today. When I heard the nurse call me obā-san, momentarily I didn't think she meant me. The next moment I told myself 'Why, it's me. I'm an obā-san.' But I haven't thought of that for some time.

"Don't Ask About the Background of Other Residents"

While the norm for terms of address is a norm that is

uniquely characteristic of Fuji-no-sato, it emerged out of necessity. In contrast, this norm (don't ask about the background of other residents) emerged out of early social interactions among the residents. The norm appears to have emerged during the first two years of Fuji-no-sato. Some early female residents boasted of their previous social status by publically telling how much money they had, what a luxurious life they led, etc., etc. It seems that these residents tried to establish their superiority over the other residents. Many early residents were impressed by these somewhat exaggerated self-disclosures. Apparently, these women were using a life-long strategy for gaining superiority over new acquaintances. However, because of the similar socio-economic background of the residents, this kind of strategy did not work in the long run. Rather, the other residents were only disgusted by such talk.

The norm emerged as a direct response to these early show-off competitions. The boasting women eventually dropped their strategy, because they realized it did not work at Fuji-no-sato. However, their social image at the community as boasters had been irreversibly established.

A second reason for this norm is the shared assumption that the move to Fuji-no-sato may have been the second best alternative, and that the residents may have had some particular reasons to be in the community that they would rather not disclose. This seems to be stronger among men than among women.

3. Problems of Controlling Social Interaction

This section discusses three problems with regard to the issue of controlling social interaction at Fuji-no-sato: (1) gossip among women, (2) the lack of mutual information among men, and (3) the management of distance. The first two problems are about information control and the third one is about social and physical distance.

Gossip

Gossip is almost exclusively women's business, and even among women it tends to be the full-time housewives rather than the never-married who engage in gossiping. I will discuss this difference shortly. Gossip is defined here to mean the exchange of more-or-less private information about other residents. The personal information can be neutral, but in most cases it is negative.

The content of gossip is divided into three categories. (1) General "neutral" information, such as who is hospitalized, who passed away, facts about new residents, and so forth. This is, in the ordinary sense, news. Since this kind of information is not harmful it is exchanged openly, most usually in the dining hall, at the hot spring bath, and on the shopping shuttle bus. (2) Speculative information about the behavior of certain residents. For instance, when a wife who generally eats with her husband in the dining hall happens to have her meal there alone, the

reason tends to be a source of speculation for the residents, who offer their own interpretations to one another. Or, when Mrs. A and Mrs. B, who used to enjoy taking a walk by themselves, stop doing so, there are various speculations. The speculative information is exchanged semi-publically, that is, in small groups. (3) Personal criticism. Personal criticisms are exchanged privately among friends and intimates and it usually begins, "This is only between you and me, but . . ." For instance, Miss C bitterly commented to Mrs. D, her friend, about Mrs. F's performance of the traditional Japanese dance at the community festival. Mrs. F volunteered for this performance, but Miss C who had taken lessons in this dance for more than 30 years, said to her friend that a beginner such as Mrs. F should not have been allowed to perform, because her performance was too clumsy.

Shortly after I began field work, one female resident said to me, "This is a fearful place," (kokowa kowai tokorodesu) apparently referring to gossip at Fuji-no-sato. I heard the same expression more than a dozen times throughout the research; always privately and spontaneously. Having carefully listened to it, I realized that this expression referred to two problems. First, these women feel that they are under constant observation by other residents and that their "inappropriate" behavior may become the topic of gossip. At the same time they feel they can do little to change this situation. Second, they feel that

they have no control over what the gossipers may say about them, even if it is absolutely false.

For example: Mrs. G and Mrs. H are both members of the same hobby group, and Mrs. H often visits Mrs. G's unit. In her mid-eighties, Mrs. G is a little disoriented. Once, Mrs. G thought that someone had come into her unit and stolen some money. She reported this to the director. Since Mrs. H was the only resident who had recently been in Mrs. G's unit, the latter began suspecting Mrs. H for the alleged theft. Mrs. G talked about her suspicion of Mrs. H both to the director and to some other residents. Soon, this news spread and Mrs. H overheard it. Mrs. H was extremely dismayed by this; she told me that never in her life had she been accused of stealing someone's money. She went to the director to state her innocence. Since Mrs. G is known by the staff and some residents to be a little forgetful and confused, these people never took that accusation seriously. But the news spread beyond this circle. Other residents who do not know either of the two did not seem to believe Mrs. G's account of the incident because such a thing is very unlikely to take place at Fuji-no-sato. Yet, Mrs. H felt strongly that she had to prove her innocence, but she did not know what to do. It was obvious that the alleged theft was Mrs. G's imagination.

Another example: As I mentioned in Chapter 1, early in my research I posted my greeting message on the board at the Community Center, in which I stated that I had studied at

the University of California for five years. Naturally, since I was an outsider, the residents freely speculated about me. Soon I learned that I had been described as the son of a wealthy family, and that I had come to Fuji-no-sato because the president of the managing organization had met me in the United States on a study tour and had invited me to do research in the community. Both of these beliefs were totally false, and I had to explain this every time I met residents who had heard them.

The gossiping residents are well aware that they should not gossip, but the gossiping does not stop. Most women who had had careers actually hate to hear gossip and think it a nuisance. One such women said, "I don't like hearing other residents gossip, so I quickly switch the topic when conversation about other residents begins." Men do not like gossip, either. In fact, it is remarkable how self-restrained men are in not talking about other male residents. When I asked them why gossip among women cannot be stopped, the most frequent answer was: "Those women (notably the full-time housewives) never learned to kill their self." (jibun o koroshita koto ga nai). By "killing one's self" they meant controlling oneself, particularly one's emotions, in order to keep working as a member of a company or a bureaucracy. Even among women, those who had careers had to learn this technique of self-control, perhaps not to the same extent as men did, but enough to get along with their co-workers.

In contrast, the social life of the full-time housewives may have been informally structured in such a way that gossiping was an ordinary practice. This tendency may have grown at Fuji-no-sato, because life in the community is monotonous without a continuous supply of social stimuli. That is, because of the seclusion of Fuji-no-sato, the residents themselves are the main constant source of new information and change.

It is also interesting to note that it is these gossiping women who are actually most affected by gossip, and the most anxious about it. Generally speaking, the Japanese are very vulnerable to personal criticism. This is because unlike Americans, the Japanese frame of reference is the others they interact with. Women whose lives are informally organized tend to form the defensive front within their level one relationships against personal criticisms and gossip. However, because the gossiping women at Fuji-no-sato are not successful in establishing level one relationships, they are unable to establish the defensive front against gossip and personal criticism aimed at themselves.

The Lack of Mutual Information among Men

While gossip is the problem for many women at Fuji-no-sato, it is the lack of information about each other that is a problem for men in their social interactions. It has been pointed out that men maintain very formal distance from one

another; they do not ask about one another's background nor do they engage in gossip. In their own words, they mutually respect one another. Men generally assume that the male residents of Fuji-no-sato are persons who achieved respectable social status in their occupations (which is quite true), but they are not in the habit of asking about backgrounds. Understandably in the context of Fuji-no-sato, such questions become even more inappropriate. Many men emphasize that regardless of their previous lives, once they become residents of the community they are all equal and should deal with each other accordingly.

One important consequence of this is the fact that men know extremely little about one another. They may know names and faces, but practically nothing further. Some men are in fact frustrated with this situation because it means that even a short, casual conversation is difficult. As I pointed out earlier, politics, economics, social issues, and the management of Fuji-no-sato exhaust the available topics. One man who was a retired physician asked me after the interview to tell him the previous occupations of some of the men. He stressed that he just wanted to know some information about other men who might have some common interests with him. He was not sure how to approach such men even if he got the information, but he was frustrated by the lack of information about the men in general.

Formal roles always provided men with norms of interaction that structured relationships. At Fuji-no-sato,

the lack of formal roles left a social vacuum, with no norms of interaction, and thereby an unstructured situation.

Under these circumstances (particularly with men socially unskilled), the social distance and impersonality structured the situation and expectations. Thus, men maintain formal distance, characteristic of the outer edge of level two relationships. They have been socialized to develop social relationships gradually through the performing of formal roles. Role-specific relationships can at least ensure continuous social interaction, within which participants may be able to find a basis for intimacy. However, at Fuji-no-sato this type of initial relationship is very difficult, due to the unavailability of formal roles. The limited interactional settings in the community only aggravate the situation.

Management of Distance

It may be understandable that the management of interactional distance becomes an important part of life at Fuji-no-sato. It is a small, secluded, fact-to-face environment, and there are great many chances for encounters once the residents go out of their units. Accordingly, the residents have developed delicate ways to avoid encounters they do not like, or at least to maintain the maximum physical distance. The management of physical interactional distance is largely a problem of women, as men keep formal distance in the first place; that is, men need not adjust

physical distance because their social distance is kept formal. Let us look at four illustrations.

Example 1: "Regions." As I pointed out earlier, informal visits to residential units are rare at Fuji-no-sato. It is shared knowledge among the residents that their social relationships do not include mutual visits. Many times I heard women say, "Our relationships here are only up to the doorstep." Goffman (1959) proposes an interesting concept, "a region" which "may be defined as any place that is bound to some degree by barriers to perception" (p. 106). He divides regions into front and back, roughly corresponding to public and private places. At Fuji-no-sato, any place outside one's unit is a public place where one's behavior is subject to the ever-present eyes of other residents, and only one's unit is perceived as the private, 'back' region, the area in which one has complete control.

Example 2: Several times a year, the staff plan one-day bus trips. The residents who intend to participate in them write down their names on a large application posted at the Community Center. By looking at the names on the paper, the residents can tell who is planning to join the trip. Generally, most residents wait until the last minute so that they are sure who is going before they decide; or they drop their names when they discover that someone they want to avoid is going.

Example 3: The residents try to avoid other residents with whom they are not getting along well in their daily

life at Fuji-no-sato. For instance, they may take a different direction if they spot such a resident at a distance. Miss Akao, for example, said she would wait in her unit for a while when she saw her upstairs neighbors leaving their unit, in order not to encounter them. Miss Akao could do this because she could see through her window the bridge that her upstairs neighbors had to take when they left their unit.

Example 4: The most elaborate pattern of the management of distance is found in different forms of greeting. Earlier I discussed that exchanging greetings is one of the key norms at Fuji-no-sato, and that an ignored greeting is a public and symbolic disgrace for the rejected residents. Due to the physical characteristics of the community, it is not usually possible to avoid encounters completely. That is, most residents do run into one another quite often. Accordingly, the residents have employed different forms of greeting in order to manage their interactional distance. Roughly there are four forms. (1) A silent bow at a maximum distance. When the residents encounter other residents they do not wish to meet, they tend to just make a bow while keeping the maximum distance, such as walking on the opposite side of the street. (2) A silent bow without distance. When it is difficult to keep a good distance, they simply make a silent bow and pass by. (3) A bow and a few words. When the residents encounter other residents who are more or less neutral to them, they

make bows and exchange a few words such as "Hello, good day," "It's getting warmer," and so on. Remarks are usually about the weather. (4) A bow and a short conversation. When the residents meet other residents who are neutral to them or who are on good terms with them, in addition to the bow and a few greeting words, they may engage in chatting. The second and the third forms of greeting are most characteristic of men, whereas women tend to select the most appropriate one according to their relationships with the residents they encounter.

Regardless of the form of greeting that is employed, the residents are very careful to make mutual eye contact. For eye contact is essential for greetings, and especially for not overlooking the greeting made by the other. Careless overlooking of another's greeting involves the serious risk of being interpreted as a snub.

4. Socialization Process of New Residents

How new residents begin their lives at Fuji-no-sato provides an unique perspective for understanding the socialization mechanism of this community. The existence of effective socialization mechanisms ensures successful social integration because "the general categories or referents of socialization and integration are the same, so that socialization becomes one major mechanism of integration" (Rosow, 1974, p. 28). During the course of the present

research, only six new residents, including one couple, became full-time residents. The rest had signed the entrance contract, but had not yet moved to the community.

The administration does very little to introduce new residents to the other residents. When a new contract is signed, the name(s) and the unit number of new resident(s) are posted on the administration board in the Community Center, this is all. However, this is not effective at all in introducing new residents to the community because there is usually a time lag between the time of the announcement and the time of the actual move to the community. Many new residents settle down in the community well after they have signed the contract, sometimes using their units as second homes in the meantime. Despite the effort of the administration to discourage the use of second homes, this pattern prevails. Accordingly, new residents seem to appear suddenly, and they are left on their own in introducing themselves to other residents.

It is a Japanese custom that new residents in a community pay visits to their close neighbors, usually with a small gift. Yet this custom is variably observed at Fuji-no-sato, and there is also confusion as to who constitute "close neighbors." In all four cases observed, the new residents had planned to follow the custom, but what they actually did varied according to the information they obtained from other residents such as neighbors, or those whom they met at the dining hall, the hot spring bath, and

so on. In two cases (a never-married woman and a married couple), after having learned that some residents they had asked did not formally follow the custom, new residents decided not to pay formal visits but just made informal self-introductory greetings when they encountered their neighbors in the stairways or outside their units. In the other two cases (a widow and a widower), both paid formal visits but differently. The widow visited all residents in the same floor of her building with a small box of candy, whereas the widower visited only a couple of neighbors on each side and the one upstairs, with no gift. The widow was advised to do this by her immediate neighbor, and the widower followed a suggestion given by a representative of the Residents Association.

During their first days, new residents are eager to collect information about life in the community. Naturally they are dependent on the staff for help with practical problems stemming from moving and settling down, but they also ask other residents for advice on such issues as which appliance store offers good service, which store is good for shopping, etc. They ask these general questions not only because the answers are necessary, but also because these are "easy" questions to ask; all residents have experienced this. There is a tendency for new female residents to associate with their first female acquaintances at this stage--their female neighbors, those whom they met at the dining hall or at the hot spring bath. If they have met

female residents before signing the contract, they try to associate with them, too.

The building representatives of the Residents Association have no official role in introducing new residents to other residents in their buildings. As pointed out in Chapter 9, the Association has no welcome committee. However, this is not unusual in Japan; there is no formal welcome for new residents in residential areas such as apartment complexes. A formal welcome is given when one enters a formal institution, such as a company, bureaucracy, or school.

None of the informal groups (hobby groups, Christian groups, and the volunteer group) actively try to recruit new residents. Thus, new residents first need to find out what kinds of informal groups exist, by looking at the schedule board in the Community Center, asking the staff there, and/or asking whatever residents they happen to meet. They then have to show up at the gatherings of the groups they wish to join. In other words, unless they are active enough to take the initiative by themselves, they have great difficulty in participating in voluntary associations.

5. Friendship Activities

Friendship is generally regarded as a function of peer group activities. As such it is a crucial variable in analyzing the development of interpersonal relationships

among the residents at Fuji-no-sato. The meaning of "friends" and the necessary attributes for friends may vary a great deal even within one culture, let alone across cultures. "Friendship activities" is used here broadly to denote the process by which the residents in this community get to know each other and to establish positive relationships with particular other residents.

Cognitive Range of Acquaintance

Table 11-1 shows, by sex, how many other residents people think they know by name and face. Needless to say, this putative measure does not necessarily correspond to reality, but it can be regarded as an approximation. This is a reasonably objective index to explore the cognitive range of the residents.

Among 48 men, 15 (31.2%) said they thought they could match the names and faces of 11-20 residents. Eight (16.7%) estimated 41-50 residents, and 7 (14.6%) estimated 1-10 and 7 estimated more than 100. About 46% of men thought they knew both names and faces of less than 20 residents at the community.

Among 81 women, 20 (24.7%) claimed they could do the task for 11-20 residents, and 20 estimated 21-30 residents, jointly accounting for nearly half of the respondents. Thirteen (16.0%) estimated 41-50 residents, 11 (13.6%) estimated 1-10 residents, and 11 estimated more than 100 residents. In comparison with 46% of the men, about 38% of

Table 11-1: Number of Other Residents that Men and Women
Claim They Know by Face and Name

Number Recognized	men	women
1 to 10	7 (14.6%)	11 (13.6%)
11 to 20	15 (31.2%)	20 (24.7%)
21 to 30	4 (8.3%)	20 (24.7%)
31 to 40	4 (8.3%)	3 (3.7%)
41 to 50	8 (16.7%)	13 (16.0%)
51 to 99	3 (6.3%)	3 (3.7%)
100 plus	7 (14.6%)	11 (13.6%)
Total Respondents	48 (100%)	81 (100%)

women thought they knew both names and faces of less than 20 residents.

On any given day, approximately 230-250 residents are living at Fuji-no-sato. Assuming that knowing the resident both by name and face is the first necessary step toward development of friendship activities, the result in Table 11-1 seems to show that the cognitive range of the residents is rather limited. Of course, the residents are able to recognize the faces of other residents more often than they can match both faces and names. Because it is not easy to know the names of other residents, an active effort is required if the resident wants to know others both by face and name. Many have learned the names of their neighbors, through participation in group activities, through mutual acquaintances, and so forth. Interesting in this regard is the fact that both men and women who thought that they knew over 100 residents often added that they got to know many people when they served as representatives of the Residents Association.

The limited cognitive range may be interpreted in terms of two perspectives. First of all, many residents are not eager to get to know other residents. They appear to be satisfied with small circles of acquaintances, even at the preliminary level of friendship. Secondly, gossip for women and the lack of mutual knowledge among men, coupled with the norm of not asking about the background of other residents, may be responsible for this result. It is nonetheless my

impression that the first interpretation is more plausible because despite the restrictive conditions at the community, the residents could have been more actively engaged in enlarging the cognitive range if they had wanted to do so.

Perceived Common Bonds of Friendly Relationships

I asked the respondents to name three residents with whom they felt familiar or friendly, and then asked what they had in common with each of the three. I used the word shitashii for familiar or friendly, and I let the respondents define its meaning. But I did not use the word tomodachi, "friends," because it clearly means closer relationships than shitashii relationships. Of course, those who said they had "friends" included these in their answers. Then I tabulated the responses by sex of respondent and basis of relationship.

The result is shown in Table 11-2, in which 11 different bonds are listed. Naming the opposite sex was virtually non-existent. Note that the basis of these common bonds is as reported by the respondent. For example, the respondent may originally have met someone at Fuji-no-sato in the dining hall or at a hobby group and then discovered that they come from the same place. She/he may then attribute the basis of friendship to their common place of origin (or to the dining hall or hobby group). We take the respondent's attribution of the basis of friendship. Note also that not all respondents named three friendly

Table 11-2: Basis of Men's and Women's Friendly Bonds

Basis of Bond	men	women
Same Hobby Groups	31 (35.2%)	54 (30.3%)
Neighbors	16 (18.2%)	49 (27.5%)
Dining Hall	14 (15.9%)	8 (4.5%)
Christian	7 (8.0%)	10 (5.6%)
Residents Association	3 (3.4%)	2 (1.3%)
Same Places of Origin	3 (3.4%)	5 (2.8%)
Gardening	1 (1.1%)	4 (2.2%)
Graduates of Same School	1 (1.1%)	8 (4.5%)
Hot Spring Bath	2 (2.3%)	7 (3.9%)
Common Friends Outside	0 (—)	6 (3.4%)
Previous Acquaintances	2 (2.3%)	5 (2.8%)
Others	8 (9.1%)	20 (11.2%)
total bonds	88 (100%)	178 (100%)
total respondents	48	81

residents, though their answers are limited to a maximum of three persons.

Overall, 48 male respondents named 88 people in the community, with a mean of 1.8 responses, and 81 female respondents named 178 people, with a mean of 2.2 responses. Thus, the Table 11-2 shows the actual number and the percentage of bonds of each kind among men and women.

First, among the male respondents, of 88 responses, 31 (35.2%) were various hobby group activities, followed by 16 (18.2%) of neighboring (neighbors were defined as residents in the same building), 14 cases of dining hall acquaintance (15.9%) and 7 cases of Christian religion (8.0%). These four bonds account for 77.3% of all common bonds.

Among the female respondents, of 178 responses, 54 (30.3%) were various hobby group activities, followed by 49 cases of neighboring (27.5%), 10 cases of Christian religion (5.6%), and 8 cases of dining hall acquaintance (4.5%) and of being the graduate from the same schools, respectively. Participation in hobby groups and neighboring are the two most dominant bonds in both women's and men's friendly relationships, jointly accounting for 57.8% and 53.4% of all common bonds, respectively.

As I stated earlier, I let the respondents define shitashii, familiar or friendly, relationships with other residents and made it clear that friendly residents should not be necessarily their "friends," or tomodachi. For the residents at Fuji-no-sato, and of course for the Japanese in

general, these two words have distinctly different connotations, referring to different levels of relationships. As shown, for both men and women, participation in hobby groups and neighboring are the two most important channels for building friendship. Also, daily activities such as eating in the dining hall or taking a bath at the hot spring are important channels for this purpose. Looking from the opposite side, if the resident does not belong to any hobby group, does not eat in the dining hall or take a bath in the Community Center, he/she has a very slim opportunity to develop friendly relationships with other residents. Thus, it may be reasonable to state that the chance for friendly relationships positively correlates with the degree of purpose-specific social interactions, although this is only a necessary, and not a sufficient, condition.

In terms of shared attributes, it is noteworthy that being Christian accounts for 8.0% of men's responses and 5.6% of women's responses. Yet, given a relatively large number of Christians among the residents, this appears to indicate that Christianity itself does not necessarily create common bonds.

It is interesting that the residents, particularly men, have not yet discovered many other common attributes which could trigger new relationships and facilitate further friendship. For instance, if men had sought more information about each other, they could have discovered

that many of them graduated from a handful of elite universities, and that their previous occupations were often very similar. (I learned these facts by reviewing the application forms and through interviews.)

Comfortable Informality for Men

In this and the next section I will discuss kinds of "friends" among men and women at Fuji-no-sato. The focus here is on tomodachi, friends rather than shitashii (familiar or friendly) residents.

Let us first discuss the men. Earlier I stated that men maintained formal social distance among themselves, and that their interaction itself was highly limited. Further, interactions tended to be purpose-specific and of short duration. These are general characteristics of men's social interactions.

In addition, it appears that the male respondents tended to interpret shitashii not so much as "friendly" but as "familiar." That is, they apparently named residents with whom they felt more acquainted than others. Against this background, the members of the golf group have demonstrated the best friendship among men at Fuji-no-sato, and I characterize it as a comfortable informality. There are eight men in this group and they play golf once a month at a nearby course. Thus it is only one day activity per month. Practical arrangements such as making reservations for the golf course are done by staff who, though not

members of the group, also participate in the play. The staff involvement includes the regular participation of the director. After each outing, the members hold a dinner party at a nearby restaurant, which one or two staff usually attend. At the party, they eat, drink, sing, and joke and talk about some of the attractive women at Fuji-no-sato. The language they use is casual, as opposed to the formal language they employ when they interact with non-golfers in the community.

All eight men remarked that they liked each other's company very much and emphasized that their relationships were different from those with other men. It is evident that they enjoy a kind of comfortable informality in their interactions. However, they regard each other not as "close friends" but as "friends for mutual company." They all have the same limited expectation of their friendships.

Whether the success of the golf group is due to compatible personalities among the members, or due to the shared interest in golf, or both, is difficult to pinpoint. I believe both play a role. Particularly important in this regard is the fact that the golf group seems to be the only hobby group in which men can continue something they did prior to their move to Fuji-no-sato. In other words, the members of this group are quite aware of both the formal rules and the informal norms (such as the expectation of a relaxed atmosphere) that go with golfing. In this sense, golf provides them with important continuity from previous

life.

It is nonetheless true that even the limited friendship among the golf group members is exceptional and thus deviant for men in Fuji-no-sato. To my knowledge, there is no study on friendship activities among old people in Japan, so it is impossible to compare their friendship with the general pattern of friendships among older Japanese men. Perhaps the best comparison that I can make is that the relationships of the golf members are similar to men's earlier relationships with colleagues, or with close acquaintances. In each case comfortable informality is expected and attained. Therefore, I speculate that the relationships of the golfers probably represent the best form of friendship that is possible in the context of Fuji-no-sato and other similar social settings.

This means that development of level one relationships at this community is not necessarily culturally expected to take place as far as men are concerned, because friendship based on comfortable informality does not mean close friends. Even so, it is important to point out that the friendship of the golfers is deviant in this community--a fact that testifies to the inadequate development of possible friendship.

It may be helpful here to discuss the difference between close friends and friends of comfortable informality. In Chapter 2 it was indicated that American friendship seems to be more instrumental and superficial

whereas Japanese friendship is relatively deeper and longer ("convoys"). For Japanese, particularly the middle class, one's best friends in life are likely to be friends from one's school years--high school or more importantly university. Of course, one makes friends after graduation, through work and other ways, but it is a well known fact that Japanese tend to maintain intimate association with school friends throughout their adult years. Thus the school friends become life-long friends, and it appears that this is more typical in men's friendship than women's.

Mr. Oki is a 74 year old retired business executive. He is also a member of the golf group. He is a graduate of one of the best universities, and ever since his graduation he has tried to attend his class reunions. His school friends constitute the core of his "close friends," with whom he has maintained intimate associations over the years.

Mr. Oki said:

The moment we meet at the reunion, we are brought back to our school days. Then we exchange our news and ask about other friends who didn't make it. It's very sad to hear of the death of old friends, and it makes me realize my time is also running out. . . . Even after I started working, it has been always these school friends, though we are scattered, that I turned to when I had real personal or family problems. We can confide in each other because we know each other down to our bones. . . . So, compared with my school friends, my relationships here (Fuji-no-sato) are only superficial, although I like the company of the golf group.

It is interesting to note that the school friends are not only life-long friends but they remain friends despite distance. Mr. Oki emphasized that since his school friends

have occupied an important part of his life for such a long time, it was not necessary for him to meet them very frequently. Thus, his school friends are like a reliable network which he can always turn to and mobilize, and for which he feels ready to be mobilized if requested-- emotionally and instrumentally.

Friends among Women

Unlike men, women appear to be eager to make friends, and despite their generally shallow interaction, women observe one another carefully and intensely in order to determine whom they could approach to develop a friendship. This may be partly because women are socialized to informal interpersonal relationships, and partly because they are more vulnerable than men to isolation.

Since the development of friendship involves a process of selection, it is important to discuss the criteria of this selection. When women talk about the basis of their friendship, many of them use the expression, "aishō no au hito" (persons who are compatible with me). Aishō is a common Japanese word which means a holistic compatibility in a dyadic interpersonal relationship. This expression is used about one's friends as well as about match-making. Since the meaning is self-evident for the Japanese, women at Fuji-no-sato simply say whether they have good or bad aishō with particular residents without specifying attributes that are either compatible or incompatible. It appears, however,

that aishō includes such attributes as personalities, lifestyles, social tastes and expectations of the relationship, among others.

There is certainly a greater number of visible friendship activities among women than among men, but it is difficult to quantify women's friendships. Thus, I will describe one case of friendship whose process of development over time at Fuji-no-sato I am best aware of, and which is probably the deepest level of friendship found among women there. The friendship in question evolved into a level one relationship, the two women having become mutual confidantes.

Mrs. Imamiya, 75, lives with her ailing husband, and Mrs. Funaki is a 76 year old widow. Both are among the earliest residents. They met each other for the first time in the dining hall soon after they moved in. Also, when the Japanese calligraphy hobby group was formed, both joined it at the same time. The group met once a week. They gradually got to know each other through this group activity and through casual interactions in the community, but they maintained a cautious distance as neither was yet certain what the other was really like as a person. Both of them told me separately about their earlier relationship. They had learned that neither engaged in gossiping nor boasted of previous status. Although they began feeling positive toward each other, they withheld any active initiative.

One and a half years after they met initially, a cue

was sent to Mrs. Imamiya by Mrs. Funaki in the form of an invitation to her apartment for tea. The cue was correctly received because it was obvious to both that it meant the dawn of a new relationship. Mrs. Imamiya could have declined if she had not been certain at that point whether they had good aishō. After this incident, Mrs. Imamiya occasionally visited Mrs. Funaki's unit, but the reverse was never true, because Mrs. Imamiya's husband usually stays home due to his illness. But this did not hinder the growth of their friendship.

Once the friendship was established, they could form a stronger bond through other social activities in the community. They help each other with shopping and other things, but they value each other's company most. They respect each other as persons, and they said separately that if they need personal advice in the future, they can confide in each other.

I do not know how typical or representative this friendship is for women at Fuji-no-sato, nor do I know the typical process and duration of friendship development in this community. My impression is that the friendship of Mrs. Imamiya and Funaki is characteristic of a minority, but not exceptional. Since I am not aware of any relevant literature on women's friendship elsewhere in Japan, it is impossible to compare such friendship in this community with the general friendship of old women in Japan in any case. But it is true that the friendship between Mrs. Imamiya and

Funaki is a genuine level one relationship. Therefore, it may be said that as far as women are concerned, genuine friendship is possible and does develop at Fuji-no-sato, but it may require a relatively long time.

Chapter 12. Conclusions

This dissertation is an ethnographic study of the social behavior of the Japanese elderly living at Fuji-no-sato, with a theoretical emphasis on social integration. As I favor cultural relativism, and, like Geertz, the interpretive approach to the study of cultures, I tried to find the meanings that underlay the observed behavior of the residents. It was not my purpose in this dissertation to generate theoretical principles regarding social integration in age-homogeneous settings for the aged. Although I am sure that the findings of this study do have significant implications, theoretical as well as practical, this point should be re-emphasized here, along with the obvious implications of limited generalizability of the findings.

A Family Substitute?

Let us recapitulate the social significance of retirement communities in Japan, in order to locate Fuji-no-sato in the larger context of Japanese society. Namely, why are retirement communities emerging in Japan now? The aged population in Japan has been growing drastically. Yet the traditional support mechanism, the dōkyo arrangement, has been growing more and more problematic, and so have norms concerning filial support. Meanwhile, due to the prosperity of the nation, many elderly have attained financial independence without the traditional support from children.

Although the Japanese government has made rigorous efforts to build many Toku-Yō homes, the long-term care system for the aged is still inadequate.

For the middle class elderly, these social factors mean that they have little control over their own fate even when they are still physically and financially independent. It is like having to count on an uncertainty--they are uncertain how much they can depend on their children and have no guarantee that they will be admitted to Toku-Yō homes when they become physically dependent.

The retirement community is so far the only social alternative for these elderly. It is a new alternative to the now problematic traditional support arrangement, and it is in a real sense the only acceptable choice for the elderly without children. Thus, it is natural that safety and security in old age ("rōgo no anshin") has been practically the only concern both for the developers and the residents, and this is true throughout Japanese society. But the retirement community is so new in Japan that it has not yet socially demonstrated itself to be a reliable alternative. Whether or not one's safety and security in old age can be guaranteed through the retirement community is still lingering as the most important question.

As such, the social and psychological needs of the residents have not been heeded by the developers, nor are the residents aware of how to live once they move to a retirement community. Metaphorically speaking, the Japanese

are so busy struggling to construct the container, that they do not think of what should be put inside.

The Japanese retirement community is one social experiment in family change. The traditional dōkyo arrangement is functionally well integrated because it is a total support mechanism in which the financial, social, practical, and emotional needs of the aged are to be met in one family setting. But it has become problematic. However, neither the Japanese elderly nor their children--or for that matter, the Japanese in general--expect the retirement community to become a family substitute in the traditional sense of total support. The crux of the issue is: Under the social circumstances, who should bear the most onerous burden of taking care of physically and mentally dependent elderly? The retirement community is socially expected to take this role, and its future in Japan is first and foremost dependent upon the extent to which it can live up to this expectation.

Establishing Level Two Relationships

Like other retirement communities, Fuji-no-sato is a very unusual social setting in Japanese society, in the sense that it is a purely informal and peer group society. To its residents, Fuji-no-sato is an unfamiliar, unstructured and newly constituted social situation in which they have few guidelines for appropriate behavior. It is an unusual setting because it exists outside of two core social

institutions for the Japanese, namely family and work place. Family and work place locate the Japanese formally and institutionally in the society with formal roles governed by accepted norms. Naturally, these institutions are the basis of the Japanese sense of belonging. Put another way, Japanese social relationships have fundamentally a dual structure, and between the two levels of this structure family is the more important, primarily because it remains the core institution throughout one's life. One is born in a family, grows up in a family, creates one's own family, and eventually dies in a family. However, Fuji-no-sato is unusual since the social relationships of the residents are not structured in the beginning by either the family or work.

It is obvious that the residents at Fuji-no-sato have tried to structure their unstructured situation by employing the behavioral guidelines in their repertoires that they thought might be appropriate. The principle guidelines are those of formal acquaintance, characteristic of the outer edge of level two relationships. They began with very few previous ties among themselves and started living together in a geographically isolated, small, face-to-face community. In the absence of appropriate behavioral guidelines to stimulate some relationships beyond the level of formal acquaintance, and in the face of restrictive conditions inside the community, such as gossip, they have in effect consolidated their formal relationships. This state of

formal relationships that is characteristic only of new or distant relationships by normal Japanese standards appears to have become stabilized as the dominant pattern at Fuji-no-sato. The purpose-specific social interactions, the tatemae (formal but shallow) relationships, the great importance attached to avoiding meiwaku, and other interactional characteristics among the residents, all in all, indicate the stabilization and thus routinization of the outer edge of level two formalities. Consequently, closer friendships ("additional significance") are limited, and development of level one relationships is found only among some women.

It became necessary to evaluate these findings in terms of Japanese culture. Namely, what is culturally expected and not expected to take place at Fuji-no-sato? If we do not answer this, the findings may be misinterpreted by those who are not familiar with Japanese culture. While there is no doubt that level one relationships are the cultural ideal for the Japanese in general, can their development be culturally expected at a place like Fuji-no-sato? The answer is: Although it may not be impossible, it is less probable than other social settings and among younger people and lower social classes. The depth of interpersonal relationships tends to be correlated with their duration. To the Japanese, relationships that start in old age plus a limited period of residence in a retirement community are not conducive to the development of level one friendships.

Given this general view, the fact that some women did actually nurture such relationships may be seen as remarkable.

But the point I would like to argue here is more the importance of social integration than the development of level one relationships, and not vice versa. Note that level one relationships outside the family are generally the outgrowth of formal relationships in level two which are governed by interplay of formal roles. They are by nature informal relations, and the prerequisite of their development has to be structured social relationships, i.e., community social integration. In other words, without community social integration, the development of level one has to be marginal, sporadic, and deviant at Fuji-no-sato. Social integration is only a necessary condition for this development.

Thus, let us assume that social integration is desirable at Fuji-no-sato. What has been found thus far is the fact that the community is not well integrated; the dominant pattern of social interaction is that of distant acquaintance by the Japanese standard. Does this mean that social integration at Fuji-no-sato is intrinsically problematic? Probably not intrinsic but problematic as it stands now. Put simply, it is not culturally expected that social integration could be easily attained in a social setting such as Fuji-no-sato because it is a purely informal setting. I believe that there is a great possibility of

social integration at this community if certain conditions are met, and I will specify what they are.

In the context of Fuji-no-sato, social integration means the establishment of solid level two relationships. By this I mean not the routinization of formal acquaintance, i.e., the outer edge of level two, but patterned social interactions which ensure constant and meaningful exchange, less formal than the level of formal acquaintance. The establishment of solid level two relationships will make it more possible for the residents to develop level one relationships.

It seems evident that peer group activities rarely generate new roles at Fuji-no-sato; peer group interaction is too foreign to the residents, particularly men. Thus, what is needed is the relative formalization of informal relationships among the residents. I must use a new concept, "intermediate roles," meaning roles that are neither formal, such as occupational or familial, nor informal, such as those found in spontaneous activities in the community. Intermediate Roles have some characteristics of formal roles, to the extent that they may structure and regulate social interactions, but rights and duties are weaker than those of general formal roles in the larger society. Intermediate Roles are not too informal to structure social interactions.

The roles in the Residents Association for men and the role of the volunteer group for women are good examples of

the Intermediate Roles that exist at Fuji-no-sato. However, these are not the dominant roles in the community. One possibility to generate Intermediate Roles is to organize groups which provide some kind of service, not for the residents themselves because it is difficult to bring stratification into their mutual relationships, but for people outside the community, either in the immediate local area or in a much wider area. Relative formalization through Intermediate Roles is necessary for social integration, but it is difficult to do this inside the community due to the limited supply of tasks for such roles. Thus, the outside connection may be necessary, primarily because it can supply tasks for Intermediate Roles and at the same time fit well the familiar framework of the residents. Note that I am not discussing whether or not the residents are willing to join such groups, but addressing a theoretical alternative for social integration in this community. The point is that there is a limitation to informal peer group functions in achieving solid level two relationships as far as Fuji-no-sato is concerned.

More practically, social interaction at this community may be further structured if more non-purpose-specific interactional settings are provided. Theoretically, the more these settings are available, the better for the purpose of structuring social interactions. Interactions overflowing from the purpose-specific interactional settings can be held there and equally important, abundant non-

purpose specific interactional settings facilitate spontaneous human flow in the community, which in turn increases the possibility of developing new relationships.

Life Style and Loneliness

Understanding the characteristic life styles of the residents is very important and necessary to understand their social behavior. One may think that a serious consequence of social relationships in this community is loneliness. However, this is not so; loneliness is not a major adaptational problem for the residents as a whole. Of course, there are some cases of relocation loneliness soon after the move to the community, but this is a temporary, not a permanent, problem. There are also several women who suffer from loneliness, but the vast majority do not. Furthermore, the preliminary analysis of the Japanese version of the Philadelphia Geriatric Center Morale Scale (Lawton, 1975) which was used in this study as an instrument to measure psychological well-being, indicates that even considering the effect of social desirability, the morale level of the residents is actually quite high.

It may be useful to make a cost/benefit comparison to understand both this seemingly contradictory finding and the life style of the residents; that is to regard the loneliness as a cost, paid for over-formal relations. Thus, the problem is: How high is the cost vis-a-vis the benefit?

Weiss (1973) makes an interesting distinction between

two sorts of loneliness; the loneliness of emotional isolation that results from the absence of a close emotional attachment, and the loneliness of social isolation that results from the absence of socially integrative relationships. If we follow Weiss' distinction, the loneliness of emotional isolation appears not to be a major problem at Fuji-no-sato, whereas there exists a kind of boredom which is characteristic of the loneliness of social isolation. However, if the cost of the loneliness of social isolation had been very high, the residents could have initiated mutual relationships more actively (despite various restrictive conditions).

On the other hand, the benefit may be a great deal of personal freedom instead of laborious and tiring interpersonal relationships, both dyadic and centered in informal groups. It is my judgment that this benefit overrides the cost of loneliness. In other words, while the residents may be less-capable (sociologically speaking) of achieving social integration in this informal peer group community, they are at the same time unwilling (psychologically speaking) to engage in interpersonal relationships at the cost that may be entailed.

Throughout the discussion, I have emphasized some themes underlying the residents' social behavior. They are: (a) a strong desire to control their own fate, (b) a strong appreciation of personal independence, and (c) a strongly individualistic orientation, all judged in terms of the

Japanese general standards. Thus, the residents do not appear to represent the general Japanese characteristics. This may be in part due to their middle to upper middle class backgrounds; they have more personal resources than the average, which enables them to shape their present and determine their future life. They are also highly intellectual people who can relate the meaning of social change to filial support.

It was also speculated that these underlying themes may have been life-long adaptive strategies for many residents and not simple outcomes of their life at Fuji-no-sato. They are very independent and individualistic for the Japanese. Accordingly, such Japanese psycho-social characteristics as intimacy and mutual dependence may not have been as important for them as they are for the average Japanese.

To further understand this, we need to go back to family, because family relationships are the very core of the Japanese psycho-social characteristics we have been discussing--they are the prototype of intimacy, mutual dependence, and amae. A significant number of the residents have lived outside the typical family situation--childless marriages, never-married, or divorced. Provided that marital relationships and, far more importantly, raising one's own children, are the basis of Japanese intimacy, we can imagine what the consequences of the deprivation of such opportunities would be in the residents' life styles. The Japanese family is essentially a closed system as far as

intimacy is concerned. Mutual assistance in adulthood may be occasionally provided among relatives, particularly between brothers and sisters. But the family of procreation becomes central in adulthood. Even sibling relationships cannot compensate for the lack of a family of procreation in later life. Therefore, it may be said that these residents had to suppress their need for intimacy and had to become socially independent. Their own childhood experiences may also be important. In short, the famous Japanese need for dependence, amae, may have had to be denied or suppressed in the lives of these residents.

Footnotes

Chapter 1

1. The name of the retirement community and individual names that appear in this dissertation are all pseudonyms. For some individuals, personal information was slightly modified in order to protect their privacy.

2. I conducted the research with three main theoretical foci: (1) social integration, (2) adaptation, and (3) the management of health, illness and death. In addition, family relationships were given particular attention in the study. However, this dissertation is only concerned with the issue of social integration. Also, while the data were collected using three methods, namely participant observation, interviewing and unobtrusive measures (see the section on methodology in this chapter), this dissertation is mostly based on the observational data.

3. The terms "the aged," "the elderly," and "old people" are used interchangeably in this dissertation, referring generally to those over 65 years old. When specification of age is appropriate, it will be noted.

4. Perhaps exceptions are desolate rural villages where young people have migrated to cities and old people are left. This is in fact a serious problem of the rural aged in Japan.

5. Since 1975, this organization has published an annual journal in which it advocates its philosophy, shares know-how on operation and management, and reports its activities. It is not a scientific journal but is the only journal specifically for practitioners in this industry.

6. The semi-public nature of the organization may in part be due to the fact that it received low-interest loans from the reserve fund of the company employees' retirement pension (Nenkin Jigyōdan).

Chapter 2

1. My understanding of the concept of culture is in agreement with Geertz's:

The concept of culture I espouse . . . is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (Geertz, 1973, p. 5)

2. Palmore's criticisms appear to be off-point because Plath explicitly states--and I think Plath is right--that his paper was meant to emphasize the negative side of Japanese aging in order to balance overly positive reports.

3. This model is based on Doi's work (1973).

4. For detailed discussion of amae, see Doi (1973).

Chapter 3

1. There are eight systems of retirement pension: worker's pensions for company employees; sailor's insurance; pensions for national government workers; pensions for municipal government workers; pensions for workers at public corporations such as Japanese National Railways; pensions for workers at private schools; pensions for agricultural/fishing association workers; and contributory national pensions. Except for the national pensions, all seven systems are based on the worker's household, that is, they include survivor's pensions. On the other hand, the national pension is based on individual enrollment and accordingly it does not include survivor's pension.

The national pension system was established in 1959 as the bottom-line net to cover those who had not been eligible for the other seven systems, such as farmers, the self-employed, workers at small factories (less than five employees), and so on. Thus, both husband and wife in this category can enroll in the national pension system. In addition, non-working housewives whose husbands are under other systems are eligible for this system (there is a non-contributory national welfare pension for those aged who have no pension, but this is a welfare program, and its role in national trends is negligible.)

2. Throughout this dissertation, amounts in yen are converted into dollars at the rate, \$1 = 240 yen.

3. Recently a conservative candidate for mayor won the election in this traditional stronghold of socialists by making the inflated retirement payments for city employees a main campaign issue. This incident has triggered a nationwide sentiment against high retirement payments for public workers, and many candidates in local elections, particularly conservatives, have begun taking up this issue. One may find a similarity to the sentiment which helped pass Proposition 13 and similar measures in California and other states in America.

Chapter 4

1. All Japanese words are underlined in this dissertation.

2. Articles both from the Meiji Civil Code and the current Civil Code are taken from Yuzawa (1970, pp. 24-26).

3. This, of course, cannot be attributed solely to the family (ie) system. There were other conditions such as economic contribution of the aged to their households, favoring the co-living.

Chapter 5

1. I owe this section to Ogasawara (1982).

2. Technically the aged and/or their families can directly apply for Keihi homes. But it seems more frequent that they first visit the office of Social Welfare Agency, which in turn recommends them to apply for Keihi homes because they are usually not eligible for Yōgo homes financially. Since Keihi homes are designated welfare homes, the officials can and do exert strong influence over admission to Keihi homes and even their operations.

3. For a political economy perspective on free medical care for the aged in Japan, see Kinoshita (1981).

4. The leading real estate company of this type uses a very misleading name for its condominiums, raifu kēā, which is the Japanese pronunciation of "life care." Although the company claims this is Japanese English, the word is misleading because it gives a false impression that they provide medical and long-term care.

Chapter 6

1. Due to the absolute shortage of land in the Tokyo metropolitan area, the value of home equity is extremely high and stable despite the change of economy.

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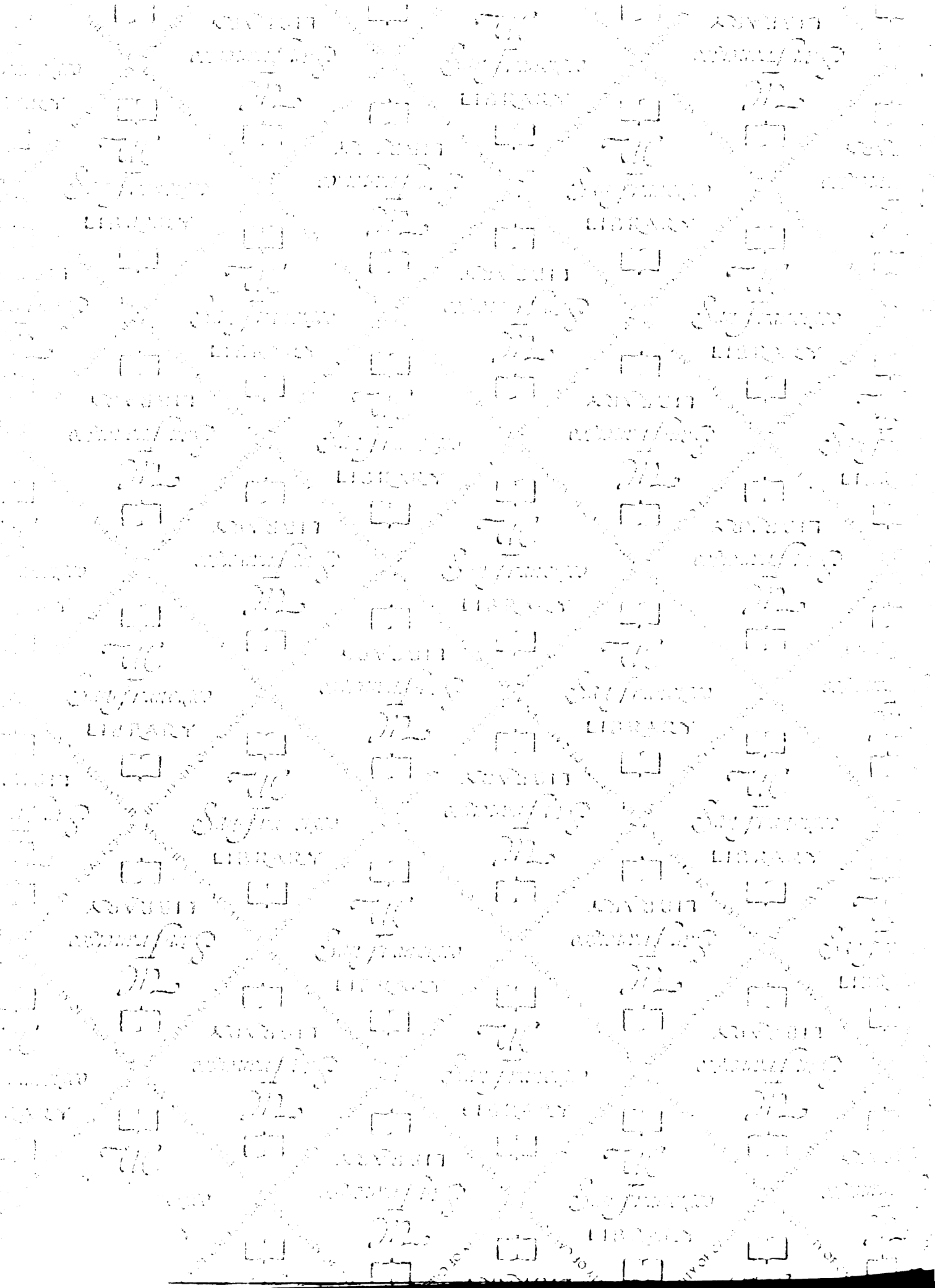
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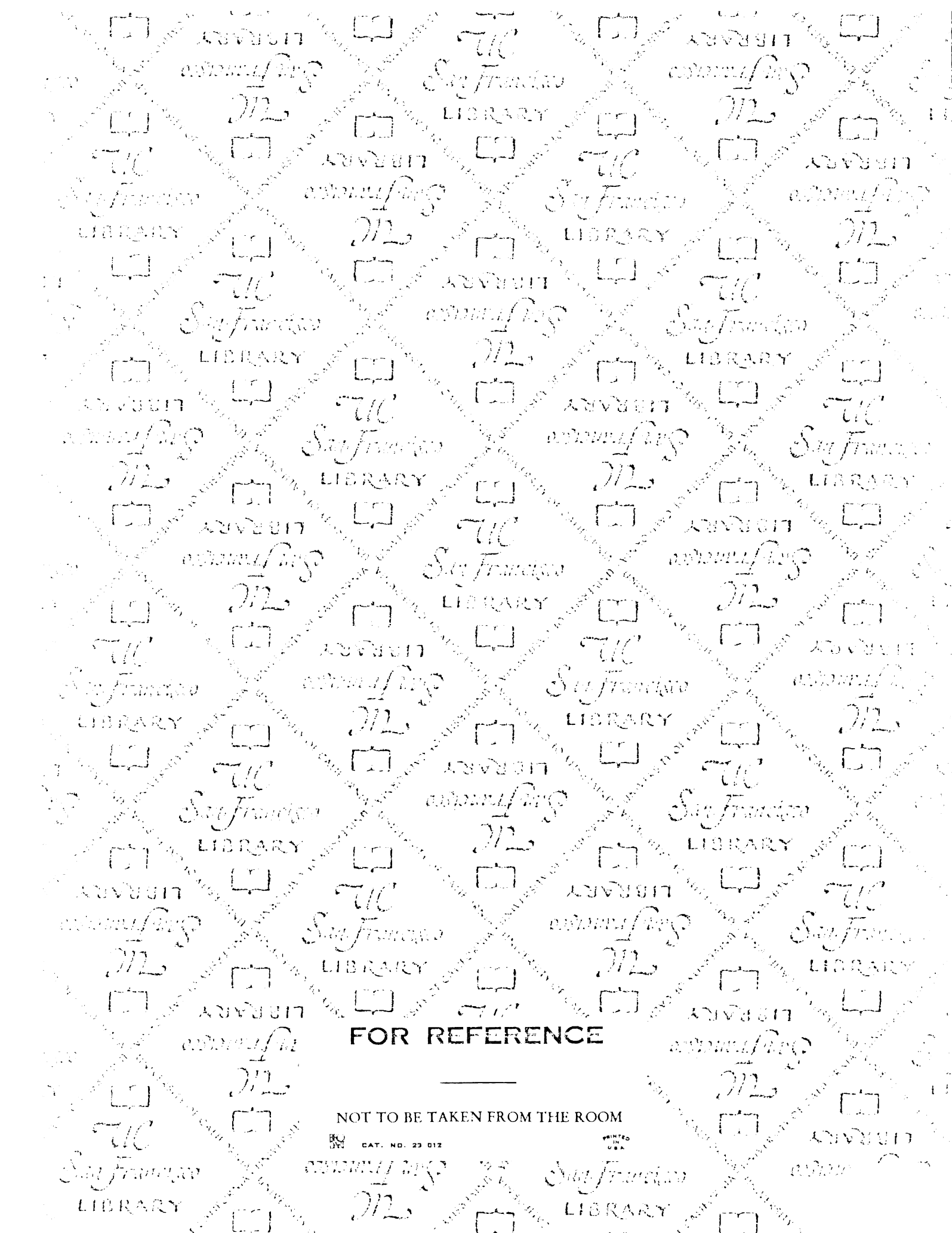
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